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Model Railroad News

The All-Scale News Monthly

Recreating Old-Time Logging Operations in the Garden

Bachmann's new 2-6-6-2 Steam Locomotive — Jewel of the Northwest

Volume 15, Issue 5 • May 2009

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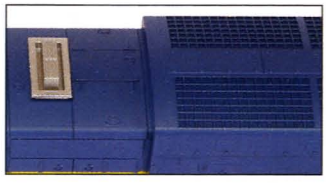

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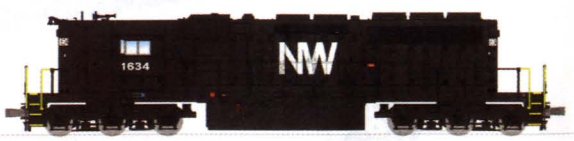

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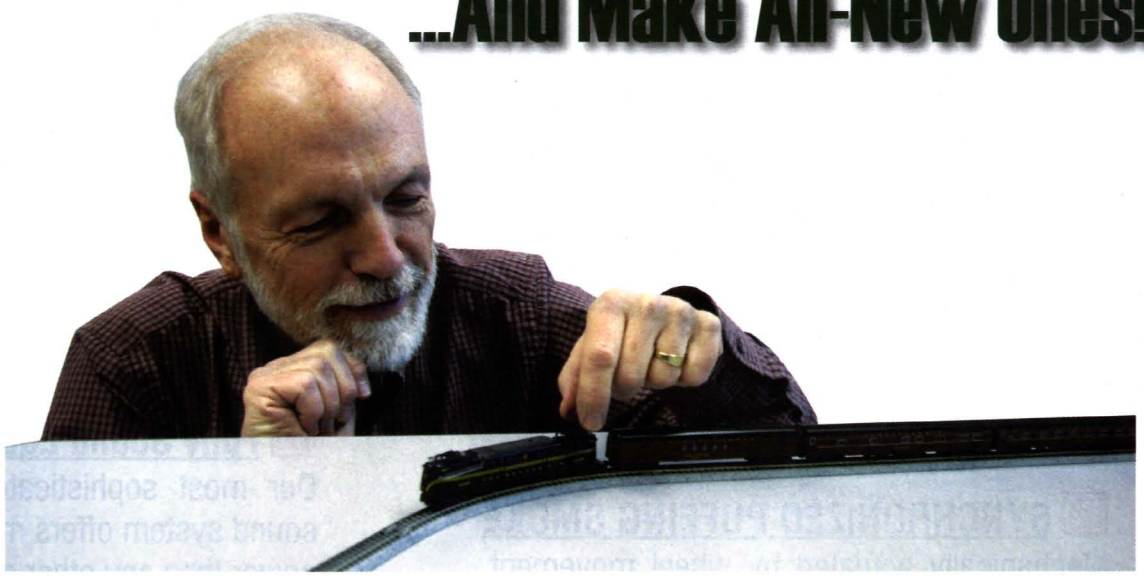

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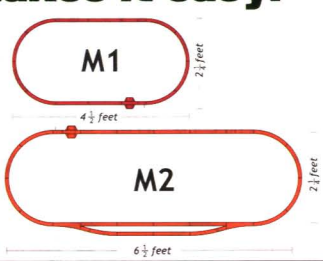

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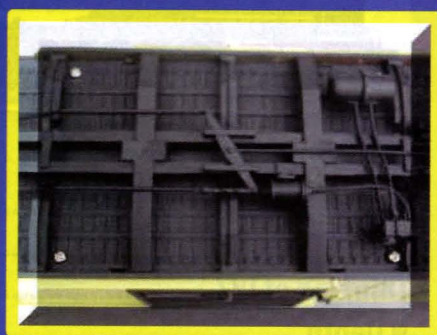

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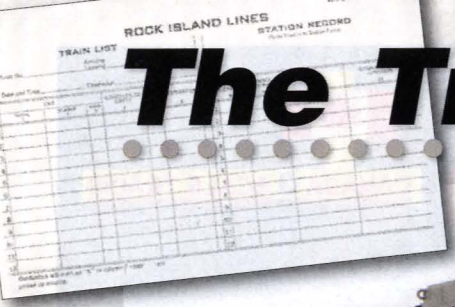
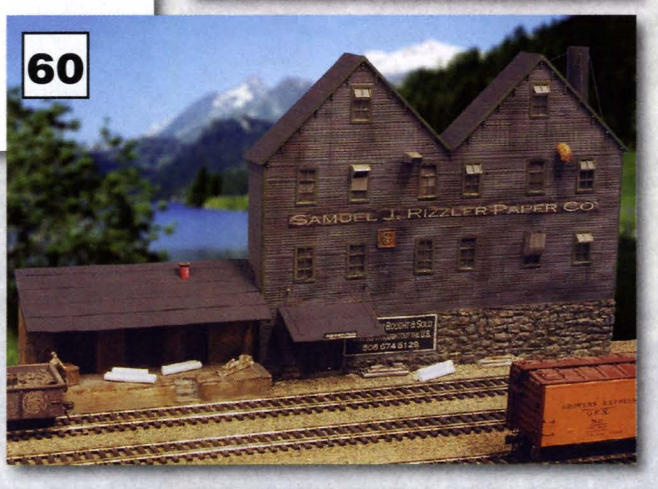
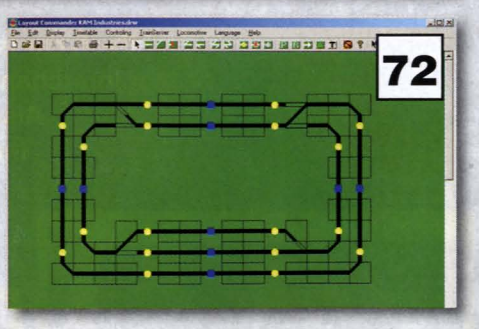
The Train List







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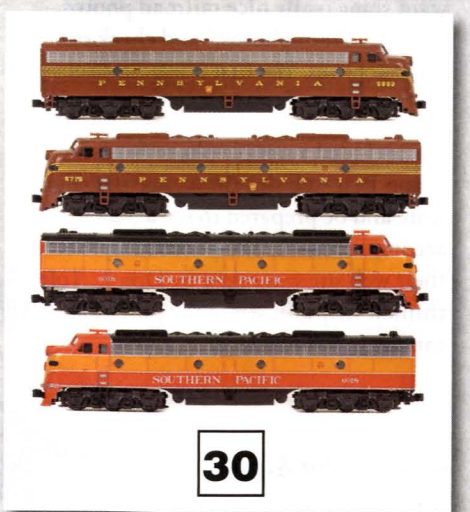
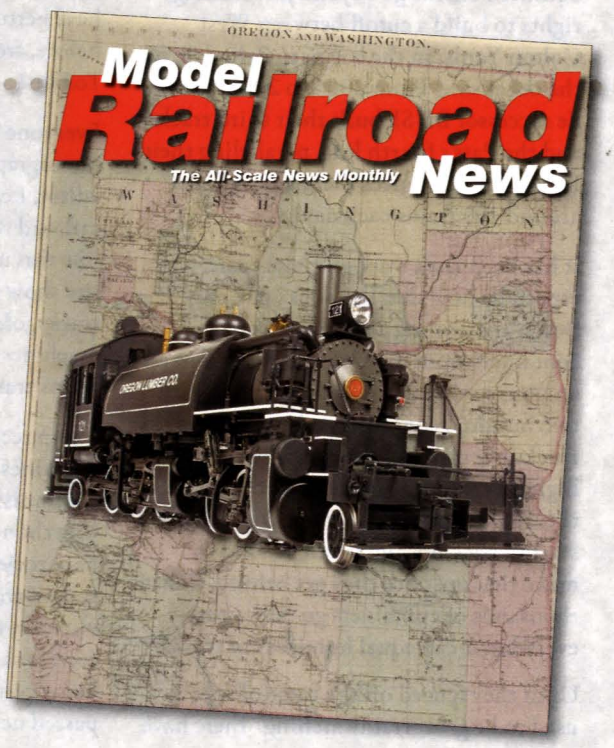


About The Cover:
The 2-6-6-2 logging Mallet was largely a tool of the Pacific Northwest. Some 42 such locomotives were constructed, and Baldwin built all but one of them. Most were found from British Columbia down to Northern California, with only a handful working elsewhere. Washington State used more than all of the other states combined, but Oregon came in second, and so it's fitting our Bachmann Mallet should appear against a background map of Washington and Oregon.
— Photo by John Sipple



Editorial

A modeler's perspective

Now and then, someone sends me something through snail mail or e-mail that just lights me up. A good example of this is an e-mail that came with a web site URL attached, www.trainmaster.ch/cajon.htm. This contains a very thorough photo documentation of the third track built by BNSF over Cajon Pass in Southern California.

Getting in and out of the Los Angeles Basin in a train is complicated work because the options are limited. You can go north up the Coast Line, south down to San Diego, or southeast out of West Colton down to Yuma before heading east. Then there's Cajon. As you start north out of Los Angeles, you hang a right and head over the mountains. This is the most directly eastward run, taking trains over the mountains that ring the Basin, connecting with the northern line up the Big Valley and the eastward line out of Barstow.

Of course, this is also the most arduous bit of railroading, the Pass being a sort of saddle that trains crawl over, like ants climbing over a rock wall. California Southern Railway, a subsidiary of Santa Fe, built the first line in the 1880s. Santa Fe built their second track in 1913, adding an extra two miles of loop to get a lower elevation and less arduous grades. 1967 saw Southern Pacific go beyond just trackage rights to build a cutoff between West Colton Yards, in the basin, to Palmdale on the other side. From 2005 to 2008, Santa Fe successor BNSF built their third track and the Pass's fourth line, paralleling their 1913 track. This gives them a capacity of around 150 trains each day.

It has been hard work all these years, especially now that the docks of Long Beach are sending a steady stream of containers from the Orient eastward to an anxious nation. Hundred-car trains with two hundred containers take two hundred trucks per train off the overcrowded highways, creating overcrowded tracks. If there's a closure of one track, the trains start to back up, and it can be hard to make that up, once they get behind. When thousands of containers go over a pass everyday, it can equal hundreds of trains.

Until they fenced off the right-of-way, it used to be great trainwatching. There have also been some spectacular train wrecks that were the result of trains getting away and plummeting downgrade until they jumped the tracks. FRA now has better rules, and railroads have improved their technology. Still, railroads don't want possible saboteurs on their tracks, so rail photography has gotten more difficult. That's what makes these photos from the year 2007 all the more impressive.

Giant backhoes load double dump trucks as they dig away a line for the third track. Your layout could have a perpetual scene such as this and take advantage of the construction models available in your scale.

A photographer's best friend is his wastebasket, because with that one tool, you only get to see the keepers. In this case, the keepers are all good, and many are flat-out spectacular. We see mountains being torn away, tunnels being daylighted, new bridges being set in place, and so much more. The mountains fight back against this encroachment by man, but we have better tools now than ever existed before, from explosives to really big Tonkas!

Everyone brings themselves to the photographs they choose, and as your editor, I can't help but imagine a model railroad with a depiction of a major project like this underway. The photos on the web site show through trains on both existing tracks, often in the background. As mighty machines mine away the mountains, major trains transit the worksites.

I keep recalling the many earthmoving machines "At The Grade Crossing" columnist and managing editor Bill Cawthon has reviewed and featured. We have reviewed the locomotives and modern freight trains, including intermodal, in virtually all scales. From Z to G, you could recreate a perpetual mountain crossing being constructed while regular rail traffic passed nearby.

How? Look at the hundreds of photos on this web site and dare to dream. Woodland Scenics and other companies make the ground color and underlying structural materials to create this diorama. You can investigate and plan all of this using the Internet. If you need more photo and informational resources, get on the Net!

We have come across sites such as "Fallen Flag Railroad Photos" at www.rr-fallenflags.org. We investigate locomotives at The Diesel Shop, www.thedieselshop.us/MPR.html, and Steam Locomotives.com, www.steamlocomotive.com. North East Rails offers all kinds of stuff at www.northeast.railfan.net.

More specific is the Unofficial EMD Homepage where I do some of my research, www.trainweb.org/emdloco. If you have a hankering for standard prototype dimensions and their various scale equivalents, drop in to www.urbaneagle.com/data/RRstddims.html. You can visit real railroad sites such as UP's History and Photos site at www.uprr.com/aboutup/history/index.shtml. Enjoy official photos courtesy of Canadian National on their web site, www.cn.ca/en/media-image-centre.shtml. Of course, Kansas City Southern has invested a lot in their image, which you can see first hand at www.kcsouthern.com/en-us/KCS/Pages/PhotoGallery.aspx.

Back up at Fallen Flag locos you can stop by all sorts of railroads from fallen flags to little-bitty operations to the big majors. Do you have questions about your favorite railroad's locomotive roster? Google them. I Googled "Southern Pacific Diesel Roster," and that turned up http://ncespee.railfan.net/. Other issues come up in modeling. If you want some really nice railroad photos, Google "Train photos," and check out what pops up. The first is http://railpictures.net/, one of my favorites.

I've included a sample photo from the Cajon Pass web site above. See the whole suite and be prepared to see a major accomplishment. The photo sample from their web site was taken by Don E. Toles; I think it helps illustrate the potential. All I can say is, "Model this!"

— By John Sipple

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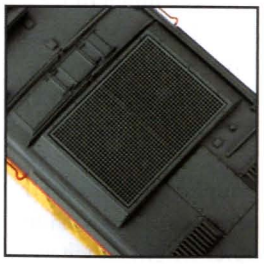
Reserve yours today from your local train store or see the model's photo gallery online at **www.athearn.com.**



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Fresh From The RPO Car

One Man's Hobby

In your March 2009 "Fresh From The RPO Car," some complaints drew my attention. Merriam Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, Tenth Edition defines hobby as "a pursuit outside one's regular occupation engaged in esp. for relaxation." When a model railroad hobby gets to the point where one's expectations exceed "a pursuit for relaxation" then the hobby becomes less enjoyable. Maybe if we lowered our unreasonable expectations we might have more fun with our hobby.

Dan E. Collins
Port Ludlow, WA

Hi, Dan. I'm in complete agreement with you. However, I also understand that one man's hobby is another man's drudgery. There seems to be a few in every hobby who take less delight from the actual process and gain more satisfaction from wallowing in "unreasonable expectations." I'm as much rivet counter as I can stand in myself. Pursue relaxation, I say! –John

Rail Codes and Proto Weights

Whoa, WHOA, WHOA! I just read partway into the Track, Accessories & Electronic piece by Phil S. He states that the code number refers to the size of the rail on the prototype. Code 55 being 55 pound rail, code 80 is 80 pound rail, etc. Well, I hate to burst Phil's bubble but the code is the height of the rail in thousands of an inch. There is absolutely no direct relationship to the weight of the real rail, especially since it changes with the scale. Now, it does represent a certain range of prototype rail, but that changes with the scale. Code 70 in O scale is near 30 pound rail, while in HO it is 112 pound, or something close to that.

There is a great chart of comparative rail sizes, which can be found at: www.s-scale.org.uk/rails.htm

And another at: www.urbaneagle.com/data/RRrailsizes.html

Everything is a bit subjective as model rail is a bit thicker and wider than the real stuff. But it is all based largely somewhat on the height in the scale.

Robert R Harmen, DDS
Grand Junction, CO

Thanks, Robert. As the editor, it's my fault that snuck into print when I know better. I won't get into how those things happen, but Murphy's First Law of Publishing applies. There are a lot of places out on the Internet where people espouse the urban myth that rail weight and model rail codes are the same. They aren't, and the good thing about this slip-up is that it lets us remind everyone of what you said so well above. –John

N-scale turnout question

I am a recent subscriber to *MRN*, and as an avid N-scaler, I love [Phil Scandura's] column. It is wonderful to have a voice to turn to as an N-scaler. My question is regarding Peco 55 electrofrog turnouts. I use these on my Siskiyou Line and am in the process of installing (when it arrives) the Easy DCC system. I was talking with Al at Easy DCC and he mentioned he had heard there were problems with these turnouts and DCC. My turnouts will all be manually controlled by the Blue Point controllers. Have you heard of any problems with these turnouts with either power to the turnout or DCC remote control of a motor driven switch machine to these turnouts?

Larry Over
Eugene, OR

Phil is inside a family emergency, and will take up business when he gets back out of it. Meanwhile, the problem any turnout can cause is due to wheel shorts. Under some circumstances, it is possible for the back of a wheel riding on a stock rail to short against the point rail. Under DC, if the train is moving slowly, the voltage is low and the short is at a lower voltage. Conversely, if the voltage is high, the short situation passes quickly. You may see a flicker in a headlight but not much else.

In DCC, the voltage and amperage remains the same on the rails, so any short is a full voltage, full amperage situation. This can overload the wiring inside the switch but more often it simply kicks the circuit breaker on the DCC system. If there is only one power district, the whole layout then shuts down. It doesn't make any difference how the switch is controlled. Since DCC systems are self-protected from shorts, the real problem is for rolling stock that bears more current than it was designed to handle.

The usual reason for the short is either a derailment that drags a wheel at an angle through the switch or a wheelset that is too narrow. An NMRA gauge will check wheels on all of your rolling stock, a good use of time. To avoid internal switch wiring being damaged, feed power into all three entry points of a switch so the turnout doesn't have to route the power. This helps make a short a very unlikely event, but your command station/booster can take it, and good wheel gauging plus full wiring will obviate almost all of it. Of course, the insulated frog is even less susceptible to these problems.

The principle value of a powered frog is to avoid the frog being a dead spot. This can be a big problem if you have locos with poor power pickup, but if your loco fleet features locos with good pickup characteristics, you'll get no added value from electro-frogs. For most modern, DCC-equipped locos, an insulated frog will work just fine, and it virtually eliminates any shorting problems (though it still is good to wire a switch all the way around and gauge check all your axles). Try one or two insulated frog switches and run your whole fleet through them. If they work fine, then you don't really need live frogs. –John

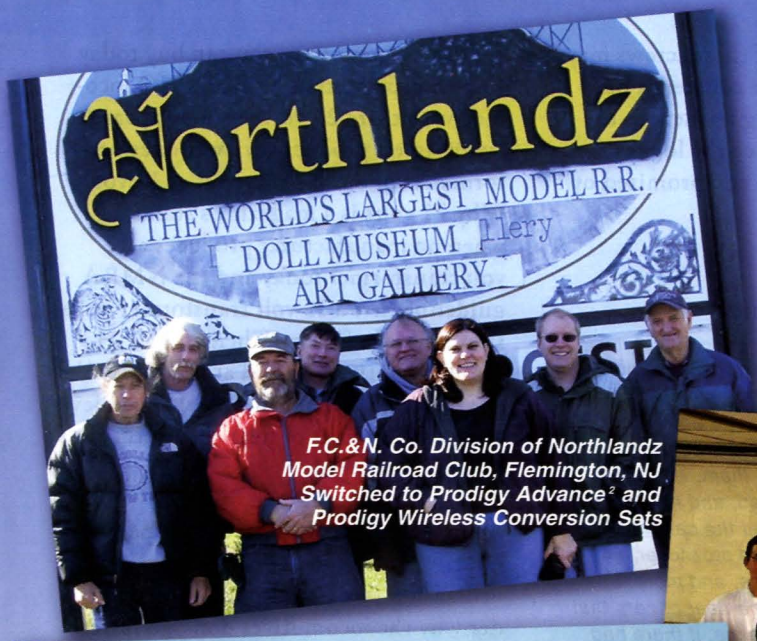
About new Bluford Shops auto boxcars

My review of the new N-scale auto boxcars from Bluford would be in agreement with your review in regards to appearance. These cars look great, especially when compared with the much older and less authentic models I have. My review, however, would have deviated from yours as soon as I put one of them on my test track.

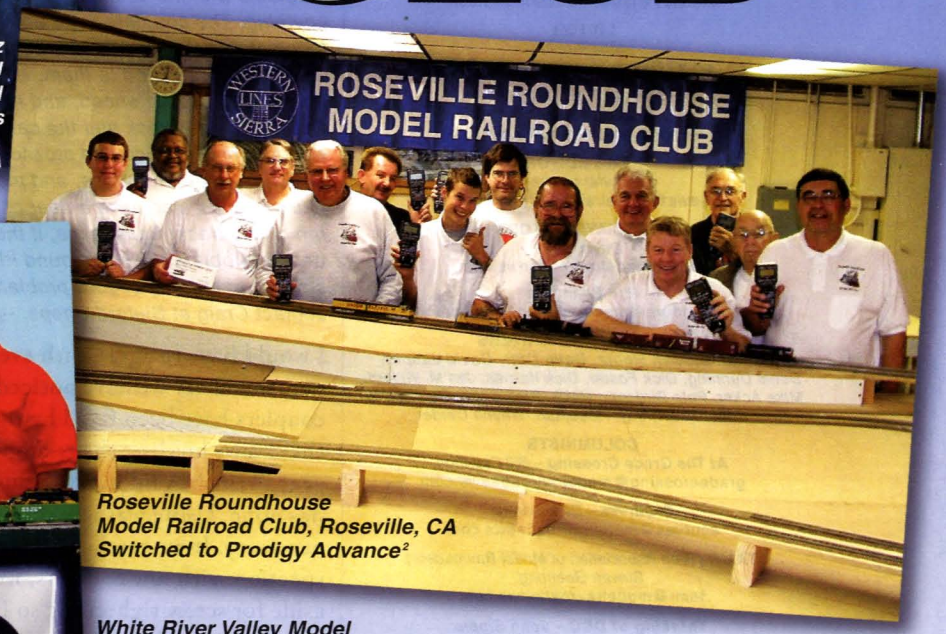
I found that the coupler heights on all three of my cars when checked with my Micro-Trains coupler height gauge were significantly lower than the standard and that the trip pins dipped down below track level. All would be fine until the cars came to a turnout or a grade crossing or were coupled to other cars.

The draft gears for the couplers are attached to the body with three screws.

JOIN THE CLUB



F.C.&N. Co. Division of Northlandz Model Railroad Club, Flemington, NJ Switched to Prodigy Advance² and Prodigy Wireless Conversion Sets



Roseville Roundhouse Model Railroad Club, Roseville, CA Switched to Prodigy Advance²

White River Valley Model Railroad Club, Hollister, MO Switched to Prodigy Advance² and Prodigy Wireless Conversion Sets

The switch is on

Clubs across the country are switching to MRC's Prodigy Advance² DCC system and Prodigy Wireless. Changing systems is time consuming, disruptive and costly. The decision to switch isn't made lightly. Yet time and again clubs are putting their existing systems aside to embrace the technology and user-friendly design that has made Prodigy the leader in DCC. *Prodigy Wireless is available as a stand-alone system or conversion set.*

The reasons

Why did these knowledgeable modelers switch? First, MRC's Prodigy Wireless delivers total wireless access, control and programming. And for all its sophistication, Prodigy Advance² features an ease of operation that's intuitive. And enjoyable. These clubs now spend their time running trains not studying manuals. Finally, should service or support be needed, modelers don't get a runaround, they get answers and action from our DCC experts. Don't take our word, ask someone who switched. *Whether you operate alone, with friends or in a club, we have the DCC system ideal for your needs.*

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Careful tightening of these screws may raise the height of the couplers a bit. I could also add spacing washers to the trucks, but I hate to see the looks of superb cars like these compromised by the extra height.

Bob Gatland
rgatland@nycap.rr.com

Hi, Bob. I ran the cars extensively and had no problems with the couplers pins hitting anything. The couplers lined up with the Kato locomotive doing the honors and with Athearn and Atlas cars joined to them. I can only report what I experienced, and my cars were fine. I use Kato track and the cars ran fine, working through a double crossover, #4 switches, coupling ramps, and more. I have a Mark IV and I also have a fleet of cars that run on my track. Believe me, if there had been a problem, I'd have found it! So my next step, after reading of your problem, was to contact Craig at Bluford Shops. –John

I would have to agree with everyone. The occasional car we have noticed with low couplers have been fixed by tightening the screws holding the triangular draft-gear swing box lid in place, just as Bob has done. Using washers should not be necessary. If we catch a car in final inspection with low couplers, we set them aside for screw tightening so I don't expect this problem is particularly widespread. I can't imagine how all three of his cars had the same issue. Time to buy a lottery ticket!

Craig Ross
Bluford Shops LLC.

A Letter from MTH on review issues

Roger Thomas brought up a number of points in his letter to the editor in the March 2009 issue of *MRN* that may mislead readers contemplating a future M.T.H. HO locomotive purchase. While we do appreciate Roger's comments about our accurately scaled and well detailed models' appearances, we think it's important to address his other concerns that may perpetuate the many urban legends that surround our HO efforts.

1. First and foremost, M.T.H. HO locomotives have never come outfitted with a "non-conforming" 24 volt motor. In reality, M.T.H. HO locomotives utilize a balanced 5-pole 12 volt motor that make them, in our opinion, the smoothest running locomotives you can buy today. The perception that M.T.H.'s HO locomotives utilize 24 volt motors appears every time a product reviewer cites performance of our locomotives at 12 volts. Why 12 volts is a magazine's standard when no manufacturer produces a 12 volt transformer today and the NMRA guidelines list a 16 volt transformer as its standard is baffling. When an M.T.H. HO locomotive is tested at the NMRA's 16 volt standard, our locomotives achieve a top end speed at or near the prototype's real life top speed.

Many might point to the lower speed our models achieve at 12 volts despite the utilization of a 12 volt motor and wonder why the locomotives don't go faster? While that logic may make sense on some level, one needs to consider that our locomotives and those from other manufacturers who build their locomotives with electronic features (digital sound systems, speed control, operating smoke, constant voltage lighting, etc.) need power to run those features. Consequently all suffer from a lack of high speed at 12 volts. Those electronic components consume available power leaving less power for the motor and a reduction in top speed. This is precisely why the NMRA advocates 16 volt transformers and why our locomotives are built around that recommendation.

2. While there is no current solution for a shorter drawbar on our locomotives, Mr. Thomas didn't mention that our steam engines don't employ a wire harness either. In fact, we're the only company that produces HO steam engines equipped with digital sound and DCC command control that don't require a tender wire harness. We are working on a retrofittable drawbar that can be installed on our locomotives much like the drawbar kits we build and sell for our O-scale locomotives. Unlike our O-scale kits, however, the HO model may require user skills, including soldering, in order to install the shorter drawbar (the O-scale kits plug in) onto the locomotive.

3. I've seen hundreds of videos on real life steam locomotives outputting white smoke. As a result, I think that our output of white smoke could be just as easily construed as prototypical in appearance. Furthermore, no one currently produces

any engine in any scale (including live steam) that outputs black smoke. Criticizing our smoke color without mentioning that fact paints M.T.H. in an unfair light (which may be Mr. Thomas' objective). Black smoke simply can't be recreated (believe me the smoke fluid manufacturers have tried) without adding particles to the output of the smoke. Those who understand the physics of light know that "black" is not a color. The "black" effect that real life locomotives output are unburned coal particles and soot. Outputting particles from our smoke units would likely be unsafe if even attainable from a design standpoint.

4. M.T.H. installs McHenry couplers on our HO locomotives and includes mounts for Kadee scale couplers. McHenry couplers are used on many manufacturers' HO locomotives.

5. While M.T.H. has not included as many DCC features in our locomotives as some would like, we do value the input we receive from HO consumers requesting more robust DCC implementation. Some of those suggestions will appear in future models. In other cases, some features already found in our engines will likely never be implemented for DCC control due to the complexities of working with a 30-year-old technology. Take for example our "quillable" whistle found on our steam engines. This feature allows the user to change the whistle pitch during operation as if the operator was pulling on the whistle cord in the locomotive's cab. Accessible via our DCS controllers, this feature can't be utilized under DCC control because the DCC communication protocol is simply too slow to activate the feature realistically. In addition, because of the multitude of different DCC controllers on the market, accessing the feature (even if DCC was fast enough) would be different from controller to controller and would likely lead to consumer confusion.

While we will continue to improve DCC implementation in our models and while we don't plan to abandon the inclusion of DCC control over our engines, we're convinced that the overwhelming majority of HO model railroaders have yet to incorporate command control on their railroads. As M.T.H. releases more and more HO locomotives (by the end of 2009 we will have released more than 18 models in just three years) we believe the ease-of-use and intuitive controls of DCS may encourage users to choose DCS as their first foray into command control. Consequently, you'll continue to see M.T.H. take a two-pronged command control approach in our HO product line.

6. While we don't currently offer a conventional, DCC-ready locomotive (DC only operation, no sound, no command control receiver) we have received plenty of encouragement from others to do so. Not surprisingly, those requests did not increase in frequency until we announced our first HO diesel locomotive (the SD70Ace). Prior to the Ace's announcement, our steam engine models, priced at $400 and higher, have commanded the attention of modelers who overwhelmingly desire the digital features found in our engines. The SD70Ace has since brought out many more requests for a conventional DC model, albeit at a considerably lower price. Modelers should know that while we take very seriously such requests, our models are not priced with a 2X value just because they're outfitted with digital technology. In other words, you'll never find a conventional M.T.H. HO locomotive priced at half what a digital version of the same engine is marketed for.

Andy Edleman
Vice President – Marketing
M.T.H. Electric Trains

Thanks for writing, Andy. My main reason for running this letter is to help settle the urban myth about motor voltage. You install 12 volt motors in your HO locos, and that's that! In your point (1), I think the source of the 12 volt standard is derived from NMRA's Electrical Standard S9, which doesn't limit the voltage to 12 volts but requires at least that amount. RP-9 in Part I, item B states that direct

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current power supplies and packs for propulsion use shall produce between 12 and 16 VDC. The US National Electrical Code prohibits model railroads from anything over 49 volts (Whoa! I'm not going there!) In any loco that contains some sort of control electronics, I have generally rated the maximum voltage for HO to be 16VDC, since DCC current is generally between 15 and 16. There remains a fear that the lights will be overpowered if run higher than 12 volts, and this is mostly not the case.

In point (2), I've got a GS-4 that would love a shorter drawbar, and I'll cover it in our magazine if you provide it. For point (3), all of the large-scale locos use an oil smoker, putting out a white oil vapor, even from the diesels. Most prototype steam locos, if they produce any visible exhaust, it will be water vapor either from the cylinder exhaust or sudden heating of moist atmospheric air. O. Winston Link had some difficulties with N&W over showing their locos making black smoke, since that indicated wasted fuel. Later he got permission and some of the firemen would make black smoke for him.

Point (4) can be laid to rest, given what I've said about making rolling stock your own. This may include adjustments of gauge on some axles, changing out couplers, and other things. Point (5) addresses the differences in the two types of systems. I've said before I think this is each model railroader's choice in the matter, and indeed, the majority of the modelers in the hobby haven't chosen to go to any form of command control.

Finally, I think it would be unreasonable to suppose the electronics would double the price of a locomotive. Most models offered in both DC and DCC/Sound versions will find the sound system running about $100 to $150 more, installed, though that price might come down in some instances. I'd remind our readers that every manufacturer in our hobby is in business to make at least some of a profit. MTH enlarges the pie, so they're entitled to a piece of it. –John

What do the letters "JMRI" mean?

I read your March article and as usual it is very interesting. I could not find what JMRI stands for and could not find contact information for them. I'm betting that I've seen that in past issues and just didn't follow up on it, but this article really interests me and I'd like to pursue. Please give me the name of the company and contact information.

Bill Sims
Rockwall, TX

Well Bill, it's my fault that information wasn't on the final installment on JMRI, though that's really not the end of our exploration there. JMRI stands for "Java Model Railroad Interface." Java is a computer language from Sun Microsystems, and it has the feature of being able to run on Windows, Macs, and Linux machines. To contact JMRI, you have only to go to their web site, http://jmri.sourceforge.net/. You can also simply Google "JMRI." –John

Moving JMRI data files

I have been using Decoderpro for a few years now, and have really enjoyed it. My problem now, is that I have changed computers and need to know how to transfer the files for the changes I have made for each loco, to my new computer. I really enjoy you articles and the magazine. The only thing that bothers me, is that you try to cover too many scales. I would suggest a magazine for only HO, and you could have another for the other scales.

Brent Leishman
via e-mail

I don't know how it works on a Windows computer, but on my Mac, I had to find where JMRI stores its XML files. From my main hard drive window, I selected Users, went to my account name, down to Library, then Preferences, and scrolled to JMRI. If you want to copy everything, from the basic configuration to all the rosters, panels, and everything else, you'll copy the entire JMRI folder to the same location where the new hard drive has JRMI, replacing that folder.

If you try a search for "JMRI" you'll probably get back a bunch of responses, but one should be a folder or directory with .XML files in it. That's the one you want. On their web site, JMRI offers the following page on finding the required files:

HYPERLINK "http://jmri.sourceforge.net/help/en/html/apps/DecoderPro/Files.shtml" \l "location"http://jmri.sourceforge.net/help/en/html/apps/DecoderPro/Files.shtml - location

I have several computers around the premises, so I actually have to synchronize them from time to time. The method is the same as the copying, since one computer is the JMRI "server," in this case the one I have adjacent to the layout. The other is in my office, connected via a Digitrax PR3 to a program track only. It is possible to have a shared directory/folder in which all the files are kept for a network.

As to splitting into two magazines, I defer to Julius Caesar who said, "Divide and conquer." Given the economic times in which we live, we're currently better off not dividing our resources. Hey, if it ain't broke, don't fix it! –John

More JMRI magic

I have been reading your excellent coverage of Decode Pro in your "Thinking of DCC" column. I am a user of Decoder Pro, so to some extent you are "preaching to the choir," but I'm glad to see the word getting out on the advantages of Decoder Pro. There is one thing you have not mentioned: Specifically, the use of Decoder Pro without a DCC system. (Perhaps you are planning to cover this in the future.) If a modeler owns a sound decoder programmer, either the Digitrax PR2 or PR3, or the QSI Quantum Programmer, it is possible to use these to program and read any decoder from Decoder Pro without a connection to your main system. (The ESU sound programmer does not allow this.)

Also, there is a device, the SPROG II, that allows connection between your computer and a track to program or even run a locomotive. I'm hoping that you will cover these options in your Decoder Pro series. I have found it to be very helpful to have Decoder Pro with a SPROG II at my workbench to allow programming and testing of engines without needing to take the engine to the layout. Of course some modelers may have had the foresight to locate their workbench where it can be reached by an engine service spur off their layout, but the rest of us can benefit by one of the methods of using Decoder Pro without connection to the main DCC system.

Barry Draper
Alhambra, CA

All I have are Macs (that's not an accident) and so QSI Programmer doesn't work around here. I haven't had occasion to do any sound programming, but I suppose there's some of that in my future. Meanwhile, I have a PR3 on the premises, and it allows my Macbook to run Decoder Pro in my office, well away from the layout and its computer, though I can't use the Sound Loader with a Mac. I can program apart from any command station, so I could also have a DCC system that didn't support JMRI. Some sound decoder locos prefer to be programmed on the main, something the PR3 won't do. –John

Sound decoder definitions

I am writing you because there is a problem in the way the manufactures

are listing their sound decoders. They list Drop-In Sound Decoders for many engines now, yet if you buy one you most likely will be able to just drop in the decoder yet there is no room for the speaker. MRC, and QSI are two that we have run into this problem with so far. No, I don't have a problem cutting a weight down to make room, but my hobby store has sent them back because they told him they will fit, but he is not going to cut when they say it is drop in. And to the average modeler they should not have to cut unless it says something like "Some modifying required for speaker location."

Chris Mueller
Portland, OR

Curious business, Chris. If a decoder fits in place of the light board in a model, it is generally referred to as a "Drop In." If it connects to the board via some sort of plug, it would be a "Plug In." If you have to take the wires from the decoder and mate them to wires inside the loco, it's "Hard Wired." If the loco comes with the decoder installed, it's "Factory Installed." That's the form of the main decoder and ignores speaker or capacitors that are tethered to it with wires.

The business of aftermarket sound is in its infancy, but the larger the speaker, the more deep it can handle. A speaker enclosure is also highly important for enriching the sound. So when an N-scale loco has a speaker in it smaller than a dime, don't expect a whole lot. If designed properly, the speaker can port the vibrations out into the rest of the world freely while having the body shell to let it develop sound.

Since the typical model locomotive is filled with pot metal, there's no room for the speaker. Carve out minimal space for the speaker, and you now have no sound chamber. Carve out enough to make room for the speaker and sound chamber and all of sudden your loco is too light to pull well. You could also mount the sound system inside a trailing boxcar with a larger speaker and a pretty good enclosure chamber, but clever human ears can look intently at this arrangement and realize the sound is following the loco, not in it.

When you look at a factory-installed sound system, you can see what you're up against. They design the frame to accommodate the speaker and the main board; you aren't ever going to match that. At times, the easiest thing is to buy a new loco with the sound system installed. I'd like a starburst on the packaging of each aftermarket sound system saying, "Caution: End-user sound installations may be nerve-wracking!" –John

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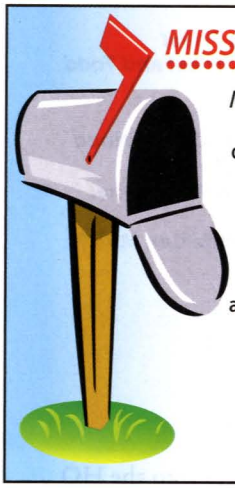

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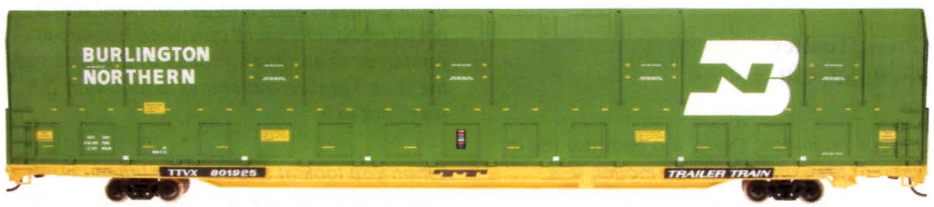
REVIEW HO

Newcomer ExactRail Hits the Rails Running

Introducing Chris Clune, three superb freight cars and soon-to-be-released N-Scale offerings



The three new models that are being produced by ExactRail run the gamut of types and sizes. These models are state-of-the-art and will definitely challenge even the most established companies for detail, quality of paint, and affordability. After talking with Chris Clune, I am sure that these cars are just the first of a long line of fantastic models from ExactRail. Make sure you also check out the new **N-scale** cars recently announced.

Review by Stephen Priest
Photos by Stephen Priest and Todd Gillette

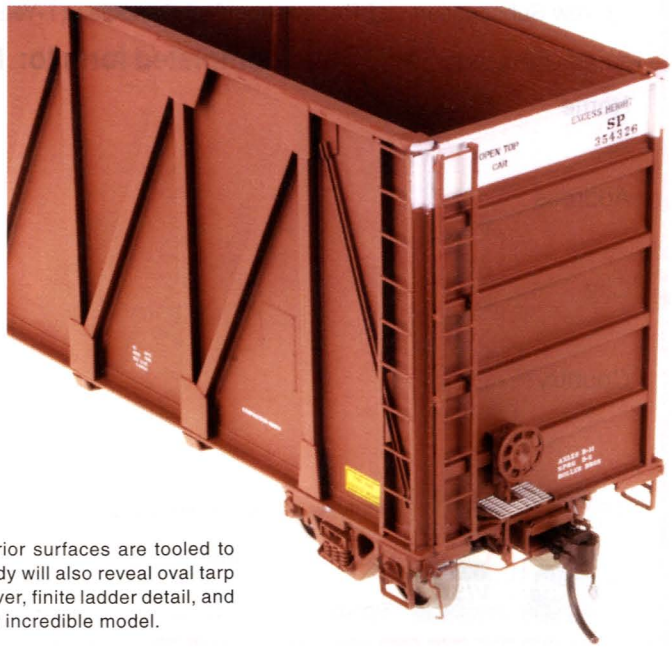
Gunderson 7466 Cubic Foot Wood Chip Gondola, MSRP: $34.95
PC&F 6033 Cubic Foot Hy-Cube, MSRP: $24.95
Vert-A-Pac Automobile Car, MSRP: $29.95

ExactRail LLC
1053 South 1675 West
Orem, UT, 84058
801-822-9256
info@exactrail.com

ExactRail's entry into the HO market is spearheaded by the release of three diverse and exciting freight cars. They are a Gunderson 7466 cubic foot composite sided wood chip car, an American Car & Foundry Vert-A-Pac and a Pacific Car & Foundry 6033 cubic foot single door boxcar. Each car type is offered in several paint schemes and each has unique roadnumbers offered, allowing the modeler to purchase several cars. The models are all late 20th century cars with builders dates varying from 1965 to the mid-1970s. However, many of these cars are still on the road today with the exception of the Vert-A-Pak cars which had a relatively short lifespan because of their very specific use hauling Chevy Vegas.

First Impressions

I think the first thing that caught my attention about the models was their packaging. The boxes are beautiful and really grab the eye. ExactRail offers two lines of models: the Evolution series and the Platinum Series. The Evolution Series is shipped in a blue box while the Platinum Series is shipped in a Platinum colored one. I slowly pulled each car from the shipping box and carefully examined it. The detailing, paint quality, and uniqueness of each car really stood out. The boxes have an internal split plastic car cradle that protects the car from damage during shipping. The packaging worked and the cars did not exhibit any signs of damage. I could hardly wait to get the cars home to my layout. The cars have brass wheel sets and come with knuckle couplers. The Vert-A-Pak, because of its length, has a



The Gunderson Woodchip car is amazing. The interior and exterior surfaces are tooled to represent plywood sheathing complete with woodgrain. A little study will also reveal oval tarp tie-downs and extremely scale side and end ladders. A scale cutlever, finite ladder detail, and etched brake platform all come together to create a formula for an incredible model.

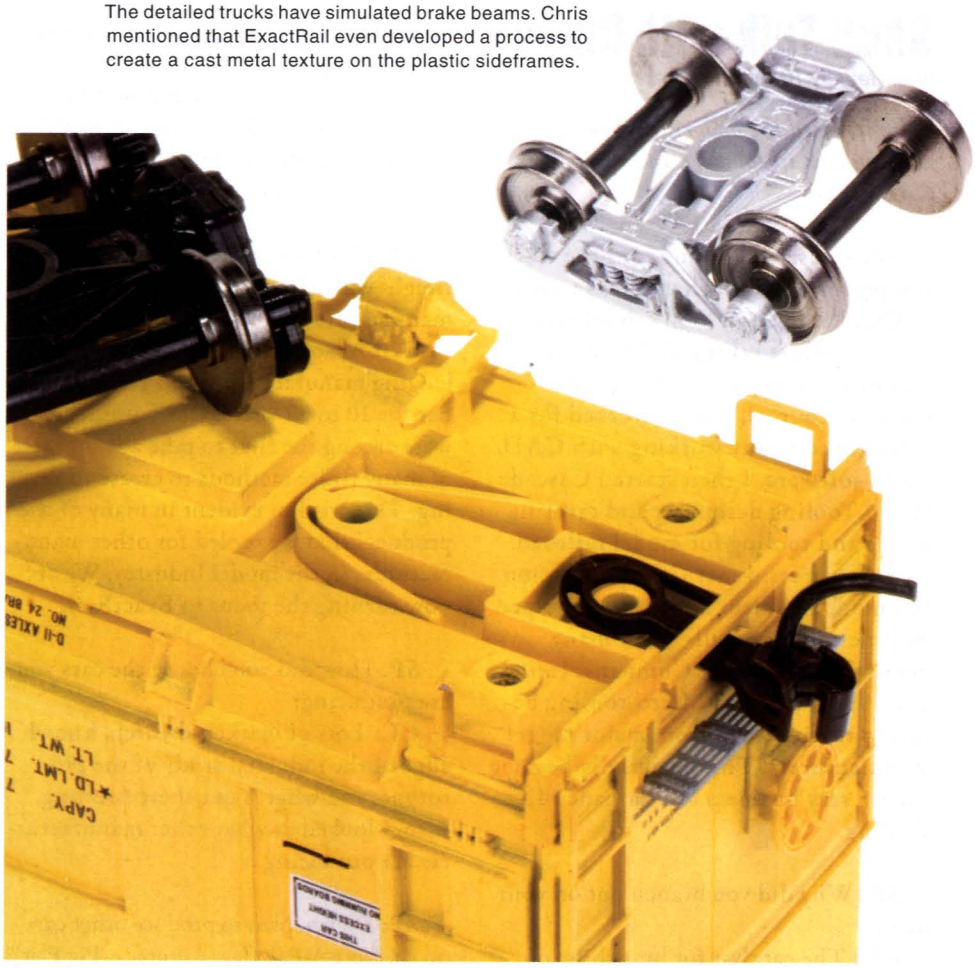
Walthers-ish coupler swing pocket draft gear design that will allow the car to work on sharper radii. I must explain that the Vert-A-Pak is one of my favorite freight cars and their availability in the market place was a pleasant surprise.

Several things really stand out on these models. First, the painting and lettering are very well done. The paint is even, opaque, and brilliant. The lettering is crisp and sharp, easily read down to the smallest font sizes with a loop. The end lettering, lube plates, and warning data are all legible, even when placed on irregular surfaces. The wood chip car in particular is impressive because the carbody has a wood-grain texture that served as the base for the lettering to be applied, and even that lettering looks great. The colors are accurate and very opaque. The UP PC&F car bears the Automated Railway slogan and its print job is unrealistically impressive, sharp, and crisp. I imagine that the paint job on the model is better than any ever applied to the prototype.

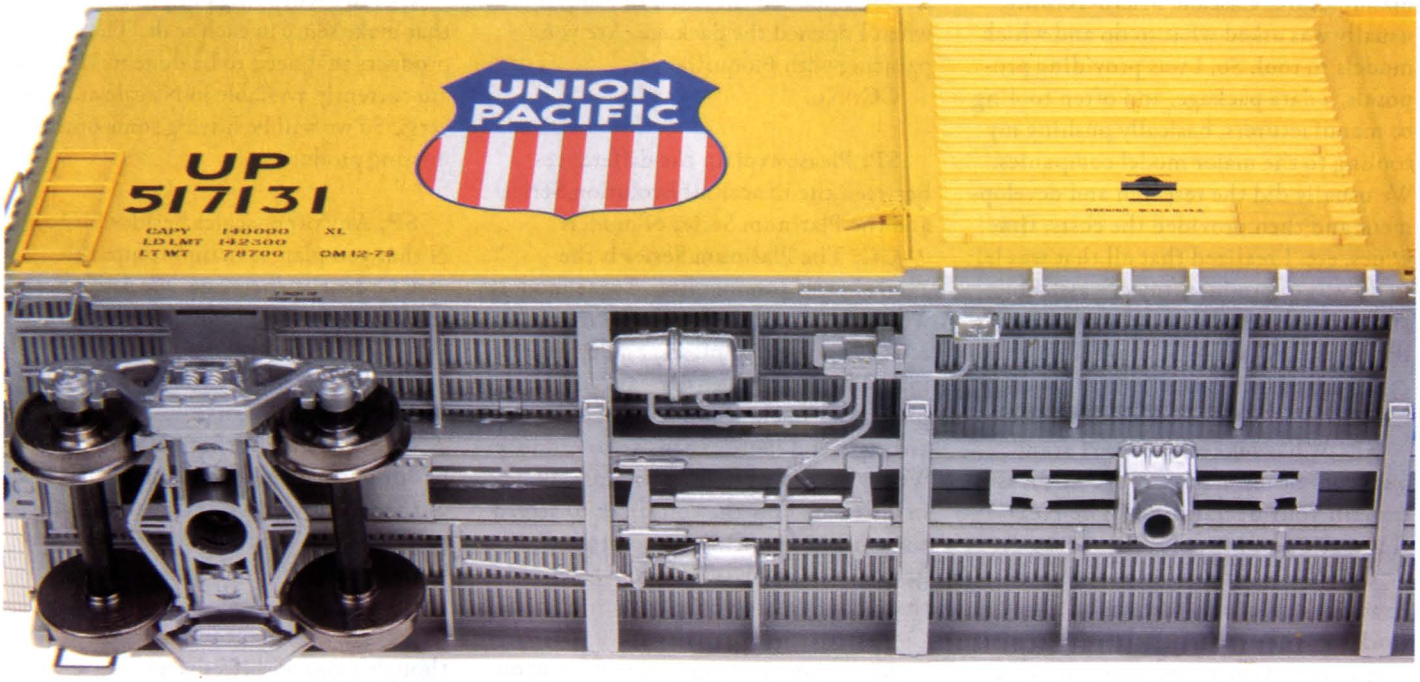
Tooling

The tooling is also very impressive. I really love the see-through end crossover platforms. The PC&F cars have etched metal full-width platforms while the Vert-A-Paks have a very fine plastic casting that mimics the prototype's fabricated platform to incredible levels. I wish

The detailed trucks have simulated brake beams. Chris mentioned that ExactRail even developed a process to create a cast metal texture on the plastic sideframes.



The Vert-A-Pak cars come equipped with a draft gear mechanism that allows the coupler to swing wide allowing the car to operate on tighter radii. This mechanism is similar to that found on Walthers 89-foot cars. The swing will lessen the chance of derailing shorter cars with the overhang of Vert-A-Pak. The cast plastic end crossover has an amazingly scale appearance and is equal to an etched metal part.



The ExactRail team not only spared no detail on the body (note the door latch and finite ladder detail) but went the extra step to research and detail the underframes of their cars. The PC&F car even had the nailable steel floor represented with respectable-and-difficult-to-tool depth. Brake rigging, piping, and cross-member details are all present. The work is astounding!

Shop Talk with Chris!

Interview by Stephen Priest

I recently had the opportunity to talk with ExactRail founder and toolmaker Chris Clune.

SP: Please talk about your the work you performed for other manufacturers.

CC: I started in high school and later in college taking machine shop classes and computer CAD/CAM software courses. Later I worked for a software company working with CAD/CAM software. I then started Cascade Micro-Tooling designing and creating molds and tooling for model railroad manufacturers. I met Gordon Cannon at a modeling meet and Gordon helped me fine tune my skills. I cut many molds for Cannon & Company. In the late 1990s, Cascade Micro-tooling began to receive work from major model manufacturers. This eventually became a main stay business for Cascade Micro-Tooling.

SP: Why did you branch out on your own?

CC: The catalyst for branching out on my own hinged on working for other people. The process was interesting because I was often asked by the manufacturers I worked with what models to manufacture. Cascade Micro-Tooling usually was asked what to do and which models to tool. So, I was providing proposals, a data package, and often tooling to manufacturers, basically pushing my tooling to the major model companies. We usually did the research and development and then provided the costs, time issues, etc. I realized that all that was left to do was to produce (inject), assemble, and paint the model and then put it on the market. Cascade Micro-Tooling basically turned into ExactRail.

SP: What makes your cars stand out from other manufacturers? Please explain your declaration "The Next Generation of Model Railroading?"

CC: We are highly innovative at ExactRail. We have many model in the works and the current releases are just a precursor. Our refinements are classic Cascade Micro-Tooling that is now being seen in our products. The tooling, finite detail trucks, etc., are all an innovation. We actually created a process of texturing the plastic on the truck side frames to make them look like cast steel. Our truck side frames show this, they are not smooth but have that cast look. That is all designed.

SP: Has raising the bar in the HO freight car field challenged other manufacturers?

CC: Absolutely, we have been challenging manufacturing and raising the bar for 10 to 12 years. CMT products were among the first to take advantage of many finite methods to create tooling. This work is evident in many of the products that we tooled for other manufacturers in the model industry. We are now turning the focus to ExactRail.

SP: How did you choose the cars you are producing?

CC: Lots of market research, knowledge of the industry, study of the prototype, and what is out there running. Also, I looked at what other manufacturers are producing.

SP: Do you plan to produce other cars on the Vert-A-Pak flat (Autorack, Pig Flat)?

CC: At this point, the answer to that would be yes. I think that is a distinct possibility.

SP: I noticed the smell of Floquil when I opened the package. Are you painting with Floquil?

CC: No.

SP: Please explain the differences between the ExactRail Evolution Series and the Platinum Series of models.

CC: The Platinum Series is the "High-Level" product line. These models will have more detail such as wire brake rods as opposed to plastic and more etchings. The more expensive cars will be placed in the Platinum line because they are nicer and more expensive to produce. We try very hard to keep the costs down in order to allow the consumer to afford the models. It is difficult to produce a good model at a cost effective level and that is our greatest challenge.

SP: Whose couplers are you using on the cars?

CC: McHenry number 41s. They look good on the cars.

SP: Do your wheel-sets match NMRA standards?

CC: They are RP-25 tooling.

SP: I noticed that your PC&F hy-cube boxcar and your Gunderson wood chip car are offered as kits but the Vert-A-Pak is not. Why?

CC: I could not imagine the Vert-A-Pak being popular with the freelance modelers. I also could not see anyone using the car for kitbashing, etc. The other two cars could be used as a basis for kitbashing or custom painting. The Vert-A-Pak had specific paint schemes that were applied to the cars. These cars operated their entire lives in their as-delivered schemes because their lives were relatively short. When the Vega died so did the cars. We will be providing the cars in the "as-built" schemes with multiple numbers, removing the need for custom painting.

SP: Any future plans and releases that you wish to mention?

CC: Not at this time. But keep your eyes open because there are a lot of neat products on the way.

SP: Please discuss your plans to launch into the **N-scale** market. I noticed your web site had been updated and that you are now offering N-scale Trinity 5161 hoppers, Vert-A-Paks, and Hy-Cubes.

CC: We will bring out products that make sense in each scale. There are products that need to be done in HO that are currently available in N scale and visa-versa. So we will be hitting some of those missing products.

SP: Any other scales besides HO and N that you plan to manufacture in?

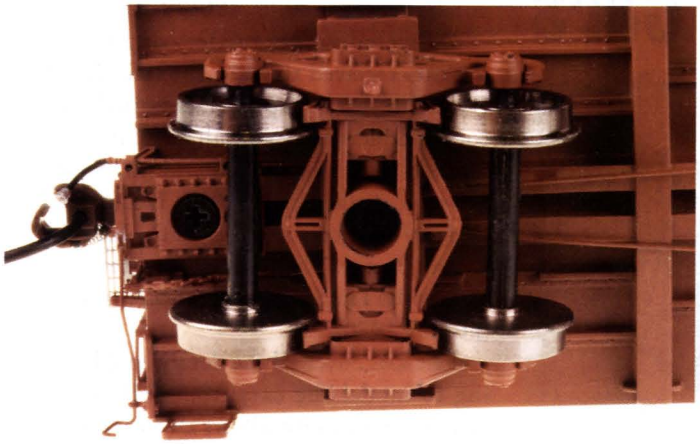
CC: Not at this time. We are concentrating on the HO- and N-scale markets.

SP: Will you be selling to hobby shops and distributors?

CC: Absolutely, that is a major part of our business model. We are very busy, but are working on our dealer business packs and are looking forward to working with the hobby shops.

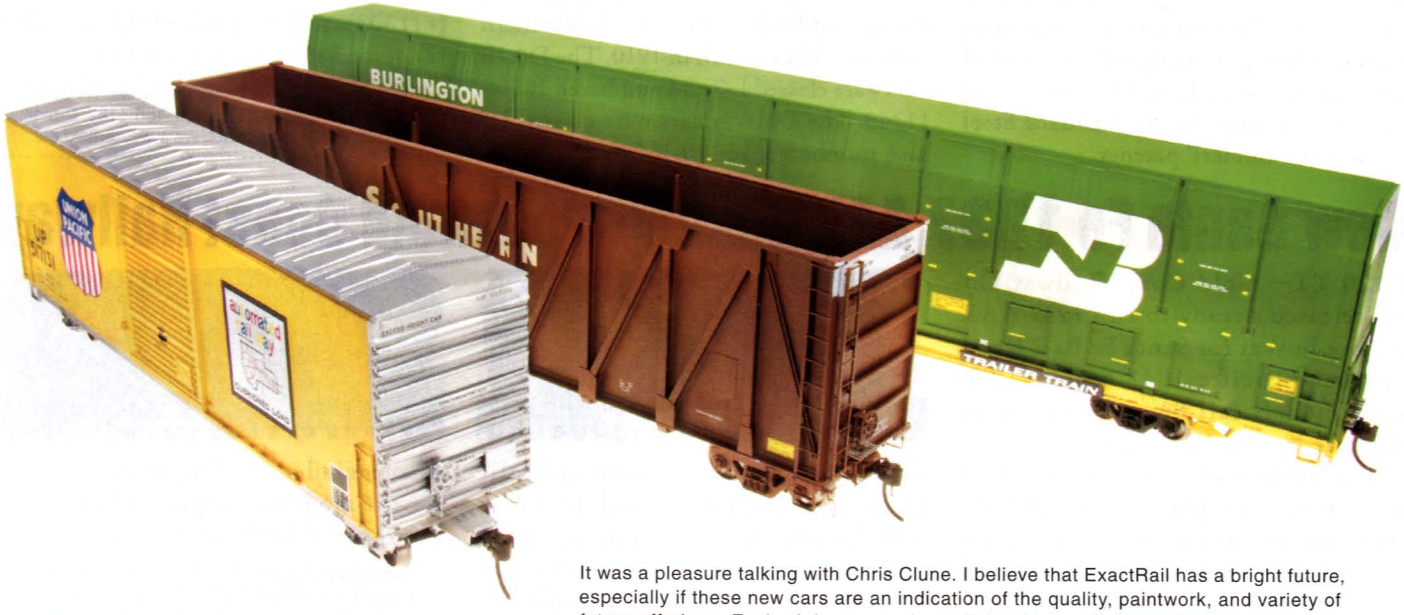
SP: Any closing comments or thoughts you wish to share?

CC: We appreciate all the support the modeling community is providing us and look forward to working with you.



The underframe detail of the Gunderson woodchip hopper reveals draftgear detail, brakepiping, cutlevers, etched metal end crossover, and detailed trucks with simulated brake beams. Notice that the brake shoes are in the same plane as the wheel treads, a nice detail not often found on typical models.

My only complaint with the overall quality of these cars was found on the Vert-A-Pak. I found the brake piping to be a bit large and the interface between the piping and the brake cylinder to be rough. A smaller scale pipe would have added greatly to the appearance of the car but possibly would have increased the cost of the model. This piece would be easy to replace if a more scale representation is desired.



It was a pleasure talking with Chris Clune. I believe that ExactRail has a bright future, especially if these new cars are an indication of the quality, paintwork, and variety of future offerings. Each of these cars is available in a multiple roadnames, each with several roadnumbers.

that ExactRail would package and sell that platform because it is very common on the prototype. The carbody tooling is impressive and even small details are carefully cut into the molds as scale sizes.

The Vert-A-Pak hinges and the rivet detailing are incredible. The PC&F boxcars have separate door latches, and end tack boards. An impressive underframe includes draft gear detailing, flooring detail, and full air brake detailing. However, in my opinion the shell finite detail winner is the Gunderson wood chip car. The wood grain is not only tooled into the external surfaces but the entire inner surface of the car is carefully cut with wood grain arranged into believable pieces of plywood. Yes, that's right, you can even see inferred pieces of plywood tooled into the into both the inner and outer surfaces of the car. Simply amazing!

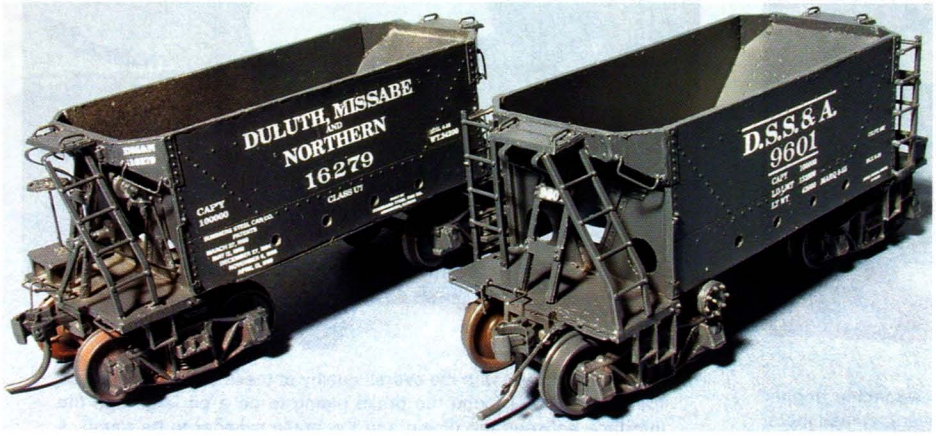
There is even a steel panel on the car sides near the right end of the car that I assume will be used to carry an ACI label at some point. This may be a modeler added detail because of the many colors needed to add the ACI to the model. However, the plate is there so adding your own ACI label is easily accomplished.

Final Thoughts

I only have one slight complaint about the Vert-A-Pak detailing. I would have preferred the air brake piping as a separate casting added to the car. I say this because the piping has a noticeable gap and awkward interface between the pipe and brake cylinder on the B-End of the car. The pipe is also a little bit large, which detracts ever so slightly from the scale of the car. Overall the Vert-A-Pak car is beautifully done and will make a great addition to an early 1970s fleet.

The trucks delivered with the cars are well done and have nice relief. Good relief, the depth of the casting, and associated parts is not always achieved by manufacturers. ExactRail has done a really great job capturing the many three dimensional planes that comprise freight car trucks. In fact, careful study of the trucks will reveal that the brake shoes are even on the same plane as the wheel treads. That is a rarity in models. A keen eye will also pick out lettering cast into the truck frames; beautiful work by ExactRail.

New Summers Steel Ore Cars



Westerfield is offering new Summers Steel Co. ore car kits in a set of two (less trucks and couplers). The original cars were built in the early 1900s and in some cases ran into the 1970s.

HO — Westerfield has released new Summers Steel ore car kits. The Summers Steel Car Company designed a number of steel cars in the early 1900s. The ore car was built in quantity, by Standard Steel Car under Summers' patents.

Commonly owned Duluth & Iron Range and Duluth, Missabe & Northern ordered 750 cars each in 1910. The D&IR cars were classed E-7 and numbered 10500-11249. The DM&N cars were classed U7 and numbered 16000-16749. SOO line ordered 200 nearly identical cars and numbered them 8000 – 80199.

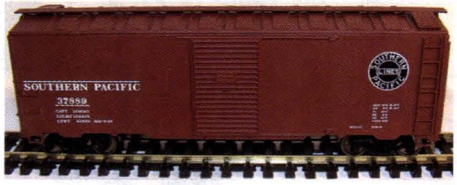
Delivered without safety appliances, the cars received them in the late 'Teens. Over the years, improvements included corner ladders and extra sill steps. In 1926, DM&N sold 150 cars to Duluth, South Shore & Atlantic. In 1937, D&IR and DM&N merged to into Duluth, Missabe & Iron Range. The DM&IR cars ran into the 1950s. The SOO and DSS&A cars ran into the 1970s.

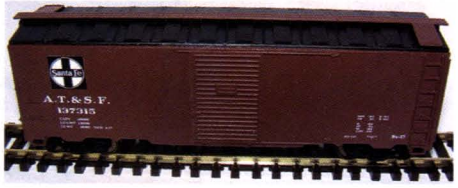
The kits cover all the details and lettering to model the cars from delivery to scrapping. Each kit allows two cars to be built. The cars are HO scale, one-piece body resin kits, less trucks and couplers. The steel car is available for the following roadnames: D&IR/DM&IR (#11301), DM&N (#11302), MStP&SSteM/SOO (#11303), and DSS&A (#11304). They retail for $55.00 for a set of two.

Westerfield, 53 River Lane, Crossville, TN 38555-7868; 931-484-7233; Fax: 931-456-4122; E-mail: westerfield@charter.net; www.westerfield.biz

New Santa Fe 1937 AAR Boxcar from Gold Coast Railway

1/120 TT— Gold Coast Railway Co. has released a ready-to-run 1937 AAR 40-foot boxcar for Santa Fe Bx-27, and Southern Pacific 1948 repaint. TT-scale models fall between the more familiar N- and HO-scales.





The models are made of injection molded styrene plastic, and include appropriate insulated metal wheels and trucks. Each model is weighted per NMRA recommendations. According to Gold Coast Railway Co., each paint scheme has been carefully researched with historical drawings and documents, and has proper road-numbers, reporting data, and color. The models come in clear plastic cases with protective blister holders. Also included is a bag of detail parts for the modeler to apply. The boxcars retail for $30.00 per model.

Gold Coast Railway Co., 230 North 2nd Court, Coos Bay, OR 97420-2402; E-mail: gcrailway@hotmail.com; www.goldcoastrailway.com

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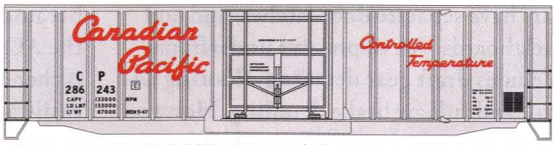

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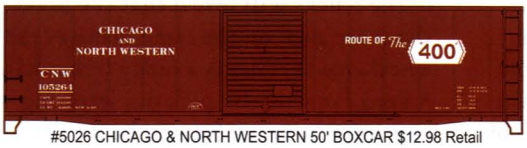

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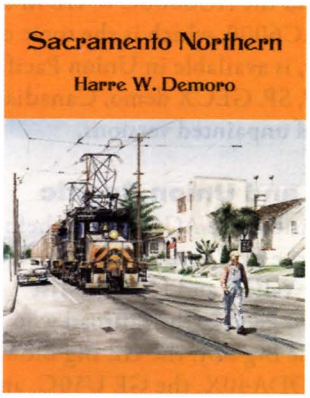

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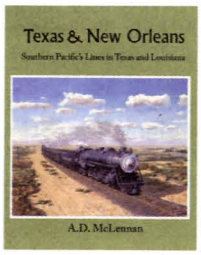

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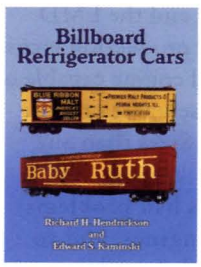

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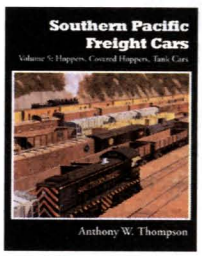

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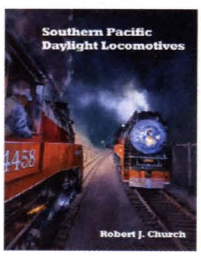

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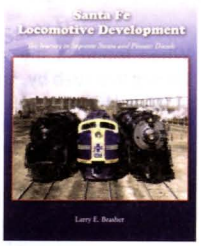

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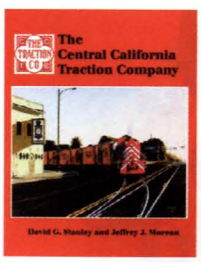

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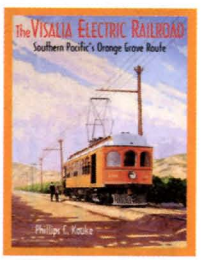

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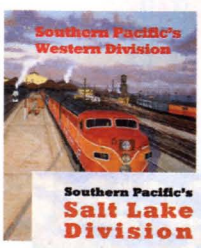

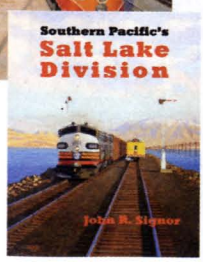

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REVIEW HO

Broadway's C60AC Takes the Rails

New Paragon 2 loco goes to work without programming!

Review and Photos by John Sipple

AC6000CW diesel locomotive, MSRP: $249.99

Broadway Limited Imports, LLC
4 Signal Ave. Ste C
Ormond Beach, FL 32174
386-673-8900 • Fax: 386-673-8080
www.broadway-limited.com

BROADWAY LIMITED'S original Paragon line offered premium models with premium electronics, helping the HO-scale world pioneer DCC sound. They also created the first commercially available DC/DCC dual-mode, auto-sensing, self-switching decoders so you could enjoy the products in either DCC or regular DC power. The Paragon 2 line takes the intermediate Blueline, which had no DCC motor decoder, requiring a second decoder added by the user, and gives the BLI-produced sound board its own internal motor decoder. No installation is required!

By-The-Numbers

AC6000CW
Broadway Limited Imports, LLC
HO 1:87 • Type: Diesel
Traction Tires? No

Pull Power (Ozs @ Full Slip)

Pull	÷	Loco Wt	=	Efficiency
5.3		27.1		19.6%
Volts		Amps		
16		0.6		

Analog DC

Start Volts = 10

Volts	Amps	Scale MPH
10	0.25	1
13	0.43	50
16	0.45	69

DCC

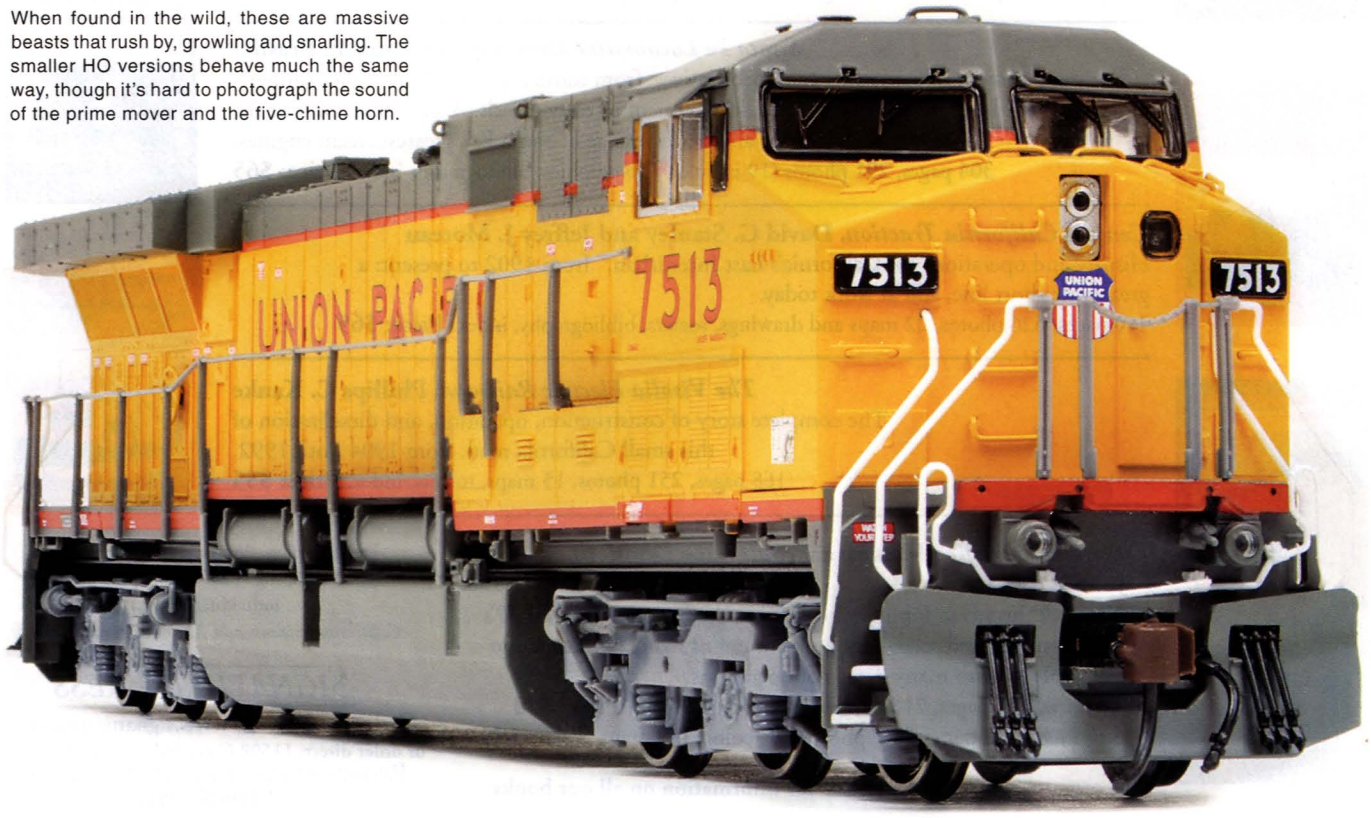
Speed	Step (of 128)	Scale MPH
Min	1	1
Mid	63	20
Top	126	78

The new Paragon 2 line currently offers an NYC J1e/d Hudson and a PRR I1sa Decapod in steam, plus an SW7 switcher and the AC6000CW GE in diesels. The AC6000, which is the topic of this review, is available in Union Pacific, CSX, BHP, SP, GECX demo, Canadian Pacific, and unpainted versions.

AC6000 and Union Pacific

We've visited the AC6000CW before, but this is the first time it's been dressed in Armour Yellow and Harbor Mist Gray. Union Pacific, the railroad who gave you the Big Boy, the GE Big Blow, the EMD DDA40X, the GE U50C, and the Alco C-855 also bought into both the GE AC6000CW and the EMD SD90MAC, the first production locos to have a single diesel engine capable of producing 6,000 horsepower or more. UP bought more Big Sixes than any other railroad.

Both loco makers had problems with their Big Six engines, and so they sold "convertible" models with conventional 4,000 to 4,400 horse prime movers that could be replaced with larger engines when they became available. None were ever converted from 4,400 to 6,000, but a number of UP's C60ACs (their name for the model) were converted downward to



When found in the wild, these are massive beasts that rush by, growling and snarling. The smaller HO versions behave much the same way, though it's hard to photograph the sound of the prime mover and the five-chime horn.

This image shows both sides of the same model, and it's a real charmer. At 27 ounces it posts just over 5 ounces of pull, enough to move 50 old forty footers with authority. Just because UP doesn't plan to run their C60s that much longer doesn't mean we can't run them into the distant future.

standard 4,400 horse engines, though some are still running with 6,000 pony mills.

The true 6,000s, which are in their last days on UP, are easy to distinguish from their lower-powered versions. While both use the same basic carbody with the radiator wings overhanging the back porch, the 4,400 has the same bathtub exhaust found on the Dash-Nines while the Six Thousands have side-by-side boxes behind the horns, one box for each turbo.

The Paragon 2 AC6000CW

We've already reviewed this loco in its various revisions by BLI. We have extensively tested and operated the original Blueline versions, and they have emerged as solid performers, once we installed the decoder for DCC operation. I have always liked the model work on their locomotives, too. Paint is excellent, detailing is very good, and the underlying mold work is top-notch. Unlike some other modelmakers, BLI doesn't burden their models with road-specific options. These things drive up the cost, so that becomes your decision as a buyer.

Make no mistake, however. This is a model of a Union Pacific C60AC. It has all the spotting signs in the right places for 7513, our sample's roadnumber. Having viewed photos of this very loco, it's got everything from the plow on the front, with the MU hoses hanging through, to the radiator overhang on the back. The most noticeable spotting signs for 6,000 vs. 4,400 hp would be the exhaust. The 4,400 has the same crosswise metal bathtub as found on the C44-9, while the 6,000 has a pair of boxes, side by side, to match the pair of turbochargers feeding the Big Six.

Functions of the Paragon 2

Unlike the first Paragon line, the DCC/DC/Sound dual-mode decoder is entirely a product of BLI instead of some other decoder maker. Unlike the BLI Blueline decoder, which is also a product of BLI, the Paragon 2 also has a motor control function within it. You don't have to open the loco and install your own DCC decoder.

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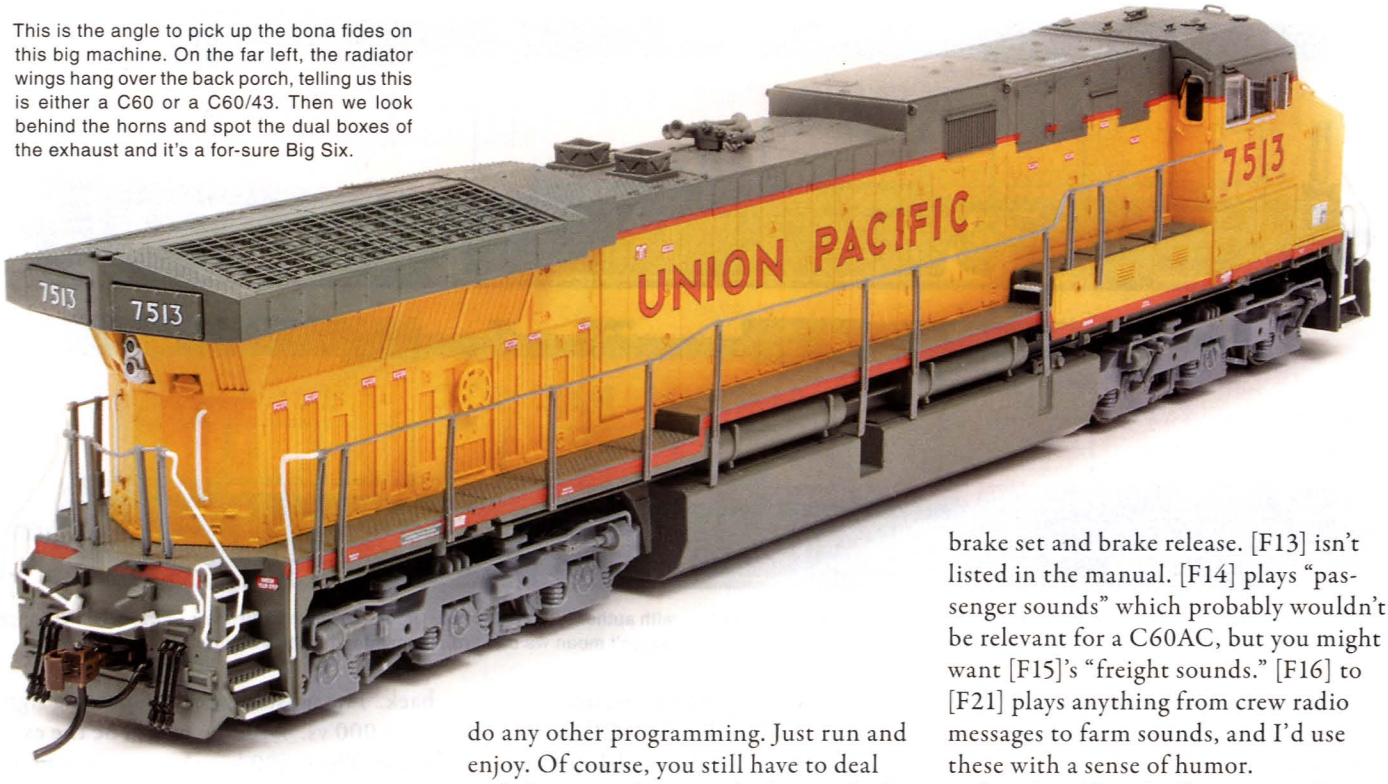


This is the angle to pick up the bona fides on this big machine. On the far left, the radiator wings hang over the back porch, telling us this is either a C60 or a C60/43. Then we look behind the horns and spot the dual boxes of the exhaust and it's a for-sure Big Six.

More than that, you don't even have to program the address into your model! NMRA RP 9.2.2 requires a default address of 3 "if the decoder is not installed in a locomotive or other unit when shipped from the manufacturer." That has always meant that if a decoder is shipped in a loco, it can have an address other than 3, meaning it can be delivered with its address set to the roadnumber of the locomotive. Our sample, for instance, comes from BLI set for 7513.

Why is this so important? We have happy DCC users out there who only have one fly in their ointment: everything on their layout is set to 3, and they don't care to learn how to reprogram the loco to the roadnumber. Now you may be scandalized by this, but the real question asks why loco makers don't routinely set the loco's address to the roadnumber from the factory? I can guess that this adds a few cents to the cost, since somebody has to do it, but the process of changing addresses is far more complicated that it would seem. To change 03 to 7513 would require CVs 17, 18, and 29 to be changed, and some command stations make it easy while others seem to bumble through the process.

So, you can take 7513 home, rail it up, put on the power, and run it from address "7513." Unless you wish to MU this loco, my guess is you won't have to do any other programming. Just run and enjoy. Of course, you still have to deal with functions because that's easy. [F0] still runs the headlights, [F1] toggles the bell, and [F2] features a quillable horn. That means you can do what real engineers do. You can play with the horn control, getting different pitches. The instruction manual tells us that the Digitrax DT400 and the NCE Procab "have the ability to 'quill' the horn." You can get unquilled but variable endings depending upon how you press the horn button. Prepare to have fun!

This new decoder gives us the full NMRA [F0] to [F28] complement of functions. [F3] plays the standard coupler sounds, [F4] plays the compressor sounds when stopped and dynamic brakes when in motion, engine notch-up for [F5] and notch-down for [F6]. The [F7] function controls the Mars/ditch lights. Ditch lights will be steady until the horn blows, at which time they will flash. [F8] not only mutes the sound with a press of the button, a double-tap on [F8] will reduce the sound from maximum to the next step of eight steps lower. [F9] is real fun! With it you can start-up or shutdown the engine, complete with sound effects. Turning the throttle knob when the engine is shut down will bring it to life without the start-up effects.

Function [10] toggles the cooling fan, [F11] controls the sound of air filling and air release while [F12] manages brake set and brake release. [F13] isn't listed in the manual. [F14] plays "passenger sounds" which probably wouldn't be relevant for a C60AC, but you might want [F15]'s "freight sounds." [F16] to [F21] plays anything from crew radio messages to farm sounds, and I'd use these with a sense of humor.

[F26] and [F27] offer a macro feature. A press of [F27] lets you start recording throttle actions into a limited memory, and another press will shut it off. After that, hit [F26], and whatever throttle actions you've recorded will be repeated. If you don't mind programming, there are two tables that could prove useful to you in the manual. The first is the function key mapping, which gives a list of each function and the Control Variable that manages it. The next is a list of function activities and the value of each. Simply take a function and key in that CV number, putting in the value of the function you want.

For example, you could decide you want [F13] to toggle the second horn. CV46 controls [F13], and the second horn toggle has a value of 19. Thus, you would program CV46 = 19 and the job is done. One daring feature of this decoder that needs to be mentioned is CV8. By setting CV8 to 38, your Paragon 2 decoder will match the function key assignments of a Blueline engine. CV8=113 matches most QSI engines, and CV8=141 squares up with the Soundtraxx Tsunami. Thus, if you already have a bunch of a certain loco type and want to have the same button presses, no problem.

I really like the sound. In past sound samples of GEs, I haven't heard the characteristic "chug" or the guttural growl

I have heard when I've been trackside. GE uses a four-stroke engine unlike the 2-stroke of EMD. The four-stroke fires off half as many times per revolution, and so when it's turning 700 rpm, it's giving off an exhaust report at the same frequency of a 2-stroke at 350 rpm, hence the more guttural sound — and this model's got it! The horn is a lovely five-chime that matches the detail on the roof.

Operating the Beast

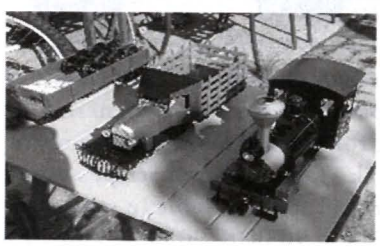
I ran this beast at speed steps 1, 63, and 126 and got, out of the box, 1 smph, 19, and 78. According to the manual, VMax CV5 defaults to 240 out of 255, while VMid CV6 is set to 50. One needs to consider what service this locomotive will handle. If it's going to pull high speed intermodal, then you might wish to try VMid at around 130. One of the issues leading to the AC traction system built into the prototypes is that of maintaining speeds under eleven miles per hour. This would burn up the traction motors of a DC traction loco. If you are modeling coal or other service with long drags pulling grades slowly, consider leaving it right where it is. Momentum up and down is set at five out of 255, and this seems about right to me. At mid-speed, try hitting reverse and enjoy seeing the locomotive gradually come to a smooth stop, reverse the lights, and slowly pick up speed the other direction.

Inside the beast is a new board and no place to plug in a motor decoder, because one isn't needed. Yeah! The speakers are pointing down out of the fuel tank, and the large black thing is a weight. The radiator wing shell still snaps off, but for no particular aftermarket purpose.

I gave it a train of 40 large, modern freight cars, most in the 50- to 60-foot range, and this 27.1 ounce locomotive just walked away with it. Even more enjoyable is the sound while it does this. The engine ramps up as you accelerate but when the loco reaches its terminal speed, the power drops down, since it takes less energy to sustain a speed than to reach it. Yet when the load increased because more of the train was wrapped around curves, the engine automatically ramped up again.

BLI and its Paragon 2

That's the real news here. I could go on for pages about all the cool stuff I've found in this loco and its decoder. Having all this stuff inside an HO locomotive is insanely cool, but making a loco you can just rail up and run from the roadnumber address without ever reprogramming a single thing makes this offering truly unique. The only problem I had was the Paragon 2 JMRI's Decoder Pro software doesn't yet have a decoder description for it. I think it would be very cool if loco makers actually created such files based on their greater understanding of their product and then sent them to JMRI to be put into the Index of Decoders. You could then download it and use it right away. But if that's the only problem I've got with this loco, then it must be a great product!



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New EMD F7A and F7B Locomotives and UP Cabooses from Intermountain

HO — Intermountain has released five EMD F7A and F7B locomotives, four ACF center flow 2-bay hoppers, new ACF 4650 cubic foot three-bay hoppers, and two UP cabooses.

Five EMD F7A and F7B locomotives have been released. Kansas City Southern (#49058 & #49558) is decorated in the red, yellow, and black paint scheme. The A-unit is available for roadnumbers 32, and 33, and the B-unit is available for numbers 32-B, and 33-B. Northern Pacific (#49060 & #49560) is decorated for the passenger service; it is painted dark green with a wide medium-green band down the side, accented with yellow stripes. The slogan "Main Street of the Northwest" is written in script on the A-unit while the "Northern Pacific" is in block letters on the B-unit. The A-unit is available for numbers 6510A, 6510C, 6511C, and 6512A, and the B-unit is available for 6510B, 6511B, and 6550B. Louisville & Nashville (#49083 & #49583) is painted gray with yellow lettering. The A-units have yellow noses with the red and yellow L&N herald. The A-unit is available in number 825, 827, 838, and 840, and the B-unit is available for 706, 708, and 709. Rock Island (#49084 & #49584) is painted bright red with a yellow stripe down the sides. The large "Rock Island" lettering is in white. The A-unit is available for 112, 122, 676, and 677, and the B-unit is available for 10, 12, and 13. Milwaukee Road (#49085 & #49585) is painted orange and black. The A-unit has the red herald at the front, and the B-unit has "The Milwaukee Road" lettered on the sides. The A-unit is available for numbers 114-A, 115-C, 117-C, and 118-A, the B-unit is available in 107-B, 114-B, 117-B, and 118-B.

The locomotives are completely assembled with wire grabs, etched metal grilles, prototype specific details, and Kadee couplers. The drive is DCC-ready with the 8-pin NMRA compatible socket on the PC board, or with a QSI sound system that will operate on DC or DCC. The A-units retail for $99.95 without sound, or $169.95 with sound, and the B-units retail for $94.95 without sound, or $164.95 with sound.

Four ACF center flow 2-bay hoppers have been released. They are decorated in the Union Pacific Shield and carry the reporting marks of four of the member roads of the Union Pacific System. D&RGW is available for numbers 10100, 10103, and 10105; Southern Pacific is available for 490137, 490153, and 490432; Missouri Pacific 705533, 705534, and 70683 ("We Will Deliver" scheme); and Chicago North Western 96750, 175008 ("We Will Deliver" scheme), and 175088. The hoppers (#465316) retail for $31.95 each.

New ACF 4650 cubic foot three-bay hoppers are now available. They are painted yellow with the blue, green, and red grain stalk logo on the right end of the car sides. The hoppers are offered in twelve roadnumbers between 1008 and 1017, and 2003 and 2017 (of which numbers 1015 and 2017) are decorated with graffiti marks. The hoppers come fully equipped with etched metal roofwalks, metal wheelsets, and Kadee couplers.

Two UP cabooses have been released: Union Pacific Mow (#CCS1070) is painted green with stenciled lettering for the UP maintenance of way in black. There is a red stripe across the bottom. It is available in roadnumbers 903003, 903018, 903038, and 903039. The second caboose (#CCS1071) is lettered in the silver Union Pacific maintenance of way scheme with large red lettering. The UP shield is on the sides with red grabs. It is available for roadnumbers 903217, 903219, 903220, and 903223. The cabooses come equipped with metal wheelsets and Kadee couplers. The suggested retail price is $49.95 each.

Intermountain Railway Co., P.O. Box 839, Longmont, CO 80502-0839; 303-772-1901; Fax: 303-772-8534; E-mail: intermountain@intermountain-railway.com; www.intermountain-railway.com

Kansas City Southern Boxcar Kit from Speedwitch

HO — Speedwitch has released a new Kansas City Southern boxcar kit based on an ARA standard boxcar designed in the 1930s. The kit represents cars used during a time when the inside height of the cars was being increased.

The unique Kansas City Southern "Interim"cars include a one-piece cast resin body, etchings, and decals for both the simple delivery scheme and the later octagonal "KCS Lines." The kit (#K114.3) retails for $42.00.

Within a few years of the introduction of the 1932 ARA standard boxcar design, the inside height of house cars began to increase, primarily through the efforts of the Pennsylvania Railroad and its X31 family of cars. By 1937, the AAR had increased the inside height of its standard design to 10-feet (and the inside width to 9-feet 2-inches). In the intervening years, a few roads experimented with cars that were based upon the existing AAR standard design, but with slightly taller inside dimensions. Railroads such as the Kansas City Southern received a block of these "interim" boxcars.

The cars of the Kansas City Southern used Wine ladders, plus a two-rung Wine ladder section at the left corner of the car side in place of handholds. They were placed in the 17000 – 17749 series. In the mid-1950s, the cars were renumbered into the 14000 series.

As built, they were decorated simply, with "Kansas City Southern" spelled out on the right half of the car side in capital letters and the reporing marks on the left side of the car. In the late 1940s, as they were repainted, they received the octagonal "KCS Lines" emblem.

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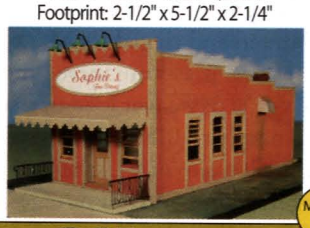

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REVIEW N

Kato's New EMD E8/9A Diesels

One more way to enjoy the Coastal Daylight *and* Broadway Limited *Passenger Trains*

Review and Photos by Steven Goehring and John Sipple

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By-The-Numbers

EMD E8/9A – SP 6018
Kato USA, Inc.
N 1:160 • Type: Diesel
Traction Tires? No

Pull Power (Ozs @ Full Slip)

Pull	÷	Loco Wt	=	Efficiency
0.9		5.0		18%
Volts		Amps		
10		0.2		

Analog DC

Start Volts = 1.9

Volts	Amps	Scale MPH
2	0.07	3.9
4	0.12	30.3
6	0.13	76.1
10	0.15	146.6

DCC

Speed	Step (of 128)	Scale MPH
Min	1	3.4
Mid	63	104.2
Top	126	167.5

We received these four locos for review and the two Pennsy units went to Steven while the two SP units stayed with John. A continent away from each other, the two pairs performed with the admirable consistency we have come to expect from Kato, and the appearance is just perfect.

RIGHT AFTER World War II, the Electro-Motive Division (EMD) of General Motors cooked up a new version of the popular E-type locomotive. They changed it, though. Most notable was the adoption of the same "bulldog" nose that graced the F-type units, and this moved the cab forward a few feet. In the added space behind the cab, the two diesel prime movers went from 1,800 HP each to 2,000 HP, meaning a lashup of three went from 5,400 HP up to 6,000, a nice bonus. This version sold very well, moving 428 A-units and 82 cabless B-units.

In August 1949, the first of 421 E8A-units appeared, and 39 B-units followed along. From May 1954 to December 1963, 100 E9A-units and 44 B-units capped off production. Externally, the E8A and E9A were virtually identical. Inside, the horsepower per engine went up to 2,200 total in the E8 and then up to 2,400 in the final E9s. The E8/9 series are notable for their Farr-type air grilles along the sides, porthole side windows, and the dismissal of the E7's equipment air intake louvers behind the cab door on each side.

Southern Pacific's *Daylight* E8 and E9s

As the subhead suggests, SP had just one E8 but several E9s. The lone E8 was an EMD demonstrator number 5600A, and SP bought it as fast as they could in 1949. Painted and rigged for SP's passenger service, it was numbered into the diesel six-axle passenger locomotives and received number 6018. The E9s were numbered 6046 to 6054, nine units in all arriving in 1954-55. After purchasing 12 E7Bs, SP purchased no further E-B units.

All ten units in the E8 and E9 group were painted and outwardly looked the same with one noticeable exception. The E8 arrived with a straight pilot and a coupler cover while the E9s were equipped with the dished-in version of the F-unit's pilot and no coupler cover. So our E8A number 6018 actually has an F-style pilot, making it technically an E9A, at least on the SP.

Pennsylvania Railroad's E8s

The Pennsylvania Railroad initially ignored E-series diesels, choosing to develop their own T-1 duplex-drive steam passenger power. They finally bit on E7s in 1946, and apparently they liked them,

because an order of 74 E8As followed. Note that no E8B units were among them; in an ironic twist mirroring the Southern Pacific, the Pennsy bought all of their E-series booster units during E7 production. Also, the Pennsylvania Railroad never ordered E9s, possibly because the envisioned postwar passenger traffic never materialized. Thus the Pennsy used its E-units on express freight service as well as passenger runs.

Kato's N-scale E8A with MRC Sound

The E8A paintwork is excellent and accurately glossy for a new passenger diesel, and all NMRA standards gauge checks came back good. All measurements on the E8 came out within scale inches of the prototype dimensions, including overall length, height, width, truck spacing and dimensions, and detail locations. Also, thanks to Kato's small knuckle couplers, the locomotives are a scale 4 feet apart, as measured from the frame ends. Measured from the molded-on diaphragms, this scales out to 3 feet, bringing the Kato model as close as can be expected of a diesel meant to operate on 9-3/4 inch radius curves. Just be careful when running this engine through minimum radius curves, as it will frequently derail. I found that bending the cab steps outwards corrected this, but remember that an E8 is a big locomotive, and is better suited to larger layouts.

This isn't the first time Kato has come out with the E8A, and while retaining the well-proportioned model and smooth drive mechanism, this one has two features that set it apart from past releases. These include the fact that this one is tied to the release of complete passenger train consists, joining with other locomotive power to recreate the various eras of these name trains. The second change is in the power board arrangement, creating an easier transition for those who would like to install a DCC decoder.

In this case, we chose to install a Model 0001645 DCC sound decoder from MRC. This is a fairly easy aftermarket DCC installation because the speaker and all required components are all on the decoder board. The directions generally are good, showing how to do this. You will be leaving out the brass contact strips that connect the truck electrical pickups on each side with the factory power and light board. The plastic retainer barriers for these brass clips need to be shaved off; I used a hobby knife or a pair of sharp wire cutters and touched up with a hobby knife chisel blade.

There are four tabs on each end to remove, but they don't take long to do. Then the board sits down atop the motor and other stuff, and some tape is needed for insulation on the frame. The brass power pickup tabs from each side of the motor stick up and make contact with copper pads on the bottom of the board. I found one of the boards didn't make good contact with the truck pickups because it was slightly cupped. I retaliated by taping that end down, gently.

One complaint I found (and later remedied) while researching other modelers' experiences with the MRC decoder was that the body shell will not fit on all the way with the thicker sound decoder in place. I tested this by coloring on the highest points of the decoder with a slow-drying marker and installing the shell to rub ink off on any contact points. I found no ink marks on the underside of the body, showing that the speaker and electronics all make decent clearance. I did notice, however, that the electrical contacts on the trucks pushed the decoder's corners. I carefully trimmed a tiny bit off of the top of each brass truck contact, making them a hair taller than the top of the gray plastic gear tower chambers where the decoder sits.

Remember that the trucks have some up-and-down play to them, and the locomotive should be sitting on its wheels when measuring for this. Make sure that the four decoder power contacts fit in the truck power grooves on the mechanism, carefully bending them as needed to put slight pressure on the truck contacts. Then reinstall the shell, and with a bit of a push, you can get it to sit all the way down on the chassis and snap in place.

Minor Hiccups

I had two problems with the instructions, the first in the motor contacts. Not said but quickly discovered is that these tabs have nothing to contact on the underside of the board. Very carefully, bend them up so they point straight up and put the board on, bending the tabs over from the outside edge of the board in, so that they lay across the electrical contact bars on the outside edge of the board. Do not thread them through the grooves cut to the inside of these contacts, as this will reduce the reliability of electrical contact with the motor. The gray plastic retaining clip that secured the original light board holds them in place, and you can then inspect to make sure you're getting adequate contact from the truck pickups.

The second problem was in the backup LED. It won't fit under the shell, and so I eventually ended up nipping it off. The E8A/9A, like the rest of the E- and F-units, didn't have back up lights as a general rule. Since this is also the decoder for the Kato P42, there is a

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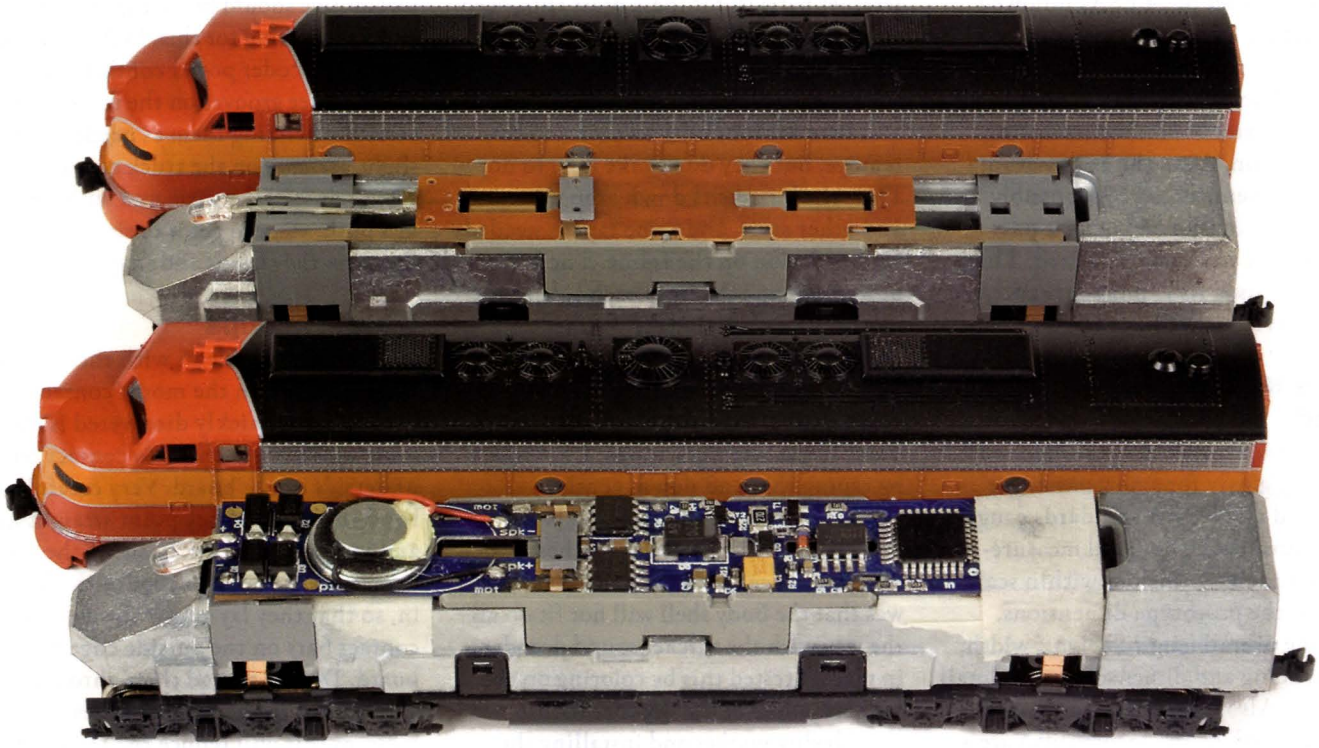


Inside we found an interesting improvement in the power board. The loco in back is still wearing its factory board and is ready to accomplish great things in DC. The loco in the foreground has been modified with the MRC sound decoder which has a speaker built right into it. Installation is simple enough, and we both liked the results!

genuine use for the backup light in that application. The LEDs have a blue-tinted white glow, rather than the yellow LED of the Kato stock headlight.

The resulting decoder has good sound quality, though it is small, befitting the miniature nature of N-scale. I predict a lot of people will like it this way. I investigated the programming in Decoder Pro and made very few changes because the loco ran very well, right out of the package. I found that top-end speed was very excessive on them, with one locomotive reaching speeds of nearly 140 scale MPH on speed step 63 of 126! I did not want to push the speed any higher, so I set the CV5 top speed to 5 or below (on MRC's typical CV value scale of 0-32.) The speed control smoothness varies by locomotive, but I easily achieved great low-end speeds with minimal programming. Unfortunately, I found the start speeds rather inconsistent due to the lack of Back EMF. It took a while to get a pair of E8s to play nicely together, and I never did figure out how to completely mute the horn, as MRC inexplicably left a voice saying "OFF" playing whenever you set the horn type CV50 to 16 (off.) It would be better off if the horn made no noise on that setting for better functionality in a consist.

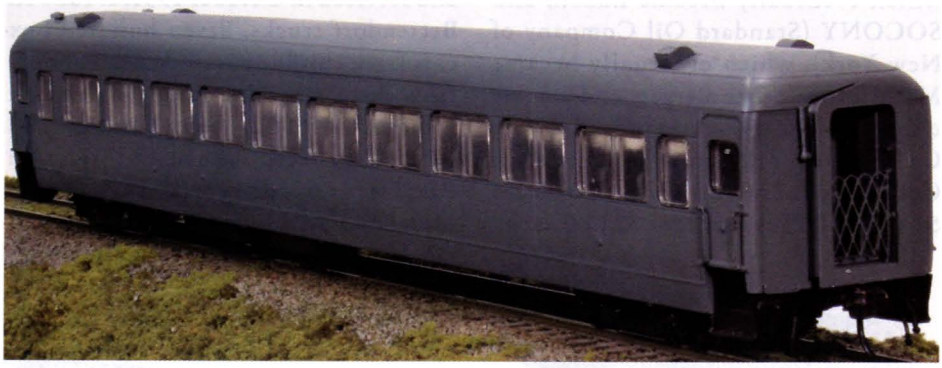
I found there were a few CV modifications that all modelers should make for an accurate E8. CV123 should be set to 0, changing the prime mover to a 567D engine sound (rather than the default 20-cylinder 645 turbocharged sound.) For a PRR E8, many of which had Nathan M3 horns, set CV50 to 10. If you have a Southern Pacific E8 or E9, tune the horn by setting CV50 to 11, as it sounds to me a lot like the Nathan M5 series horns used on SP cab diesels. CV52, the bell choice variable, sounds best at 0, with CV54 (ring rate), set to 3. Many of the other CVs are volume controls, which you should set depending on your room size. I found that even at level 2 on a 0 to 3 scale, the air horn could make my ears rattle in either my old bedroom or my dorm; on my layout in my parents' basement, it sounded quieter. I put most of the volume controls at 1 or 0 (zero is NOT a mute setting, inexplicably) and left the horn at 2. Overall, the volume controls have functionality to set various sounds to appropriate volume levels, but the lack of a mute setting, a master volume control, and the short range of values in volume CVs begs for improvement in future releases.

But then, the straight DC locomotive is a charmer, as well. It does not inherit the sometimes-unpredictable starting speeds that the MRC decoder suffers from, and like N-scale operators have come to expect from Kato, it's smooth, quiet, and powerful. They run together very well even without a decoder, and the headlight is at a good brightness through much of the throttle range. The high top-end speed does shorten the throttle range, but I would never dare call a Kato "touchy," as in my experience, they are the meaning of "smooth."

Wrapping up the Coastal Daylight and Broadway Limited Experience

The E8A compliments the *Coast Daylight* and *Broadway Limited* releases perfectly, and the MRC sound decoder measures up quite well, especially considering that it is a part of a very new field of products. The locomotive and soundboard make for an impressive package, and for a college kid, if you have the space, the added dimension of sound really impresses visitors. I would recommend the E8 sound conversion to any modelers willing to test, correct minor installation issues, and reprogram a few CVs, because the extra effort yields a very impressive model, two of which I will be running for years to come.

Rapido Celebrates 75th Anniversary of Light Weight Passenger Car with New Model



Rapido is marking the 75th anniversary of the lightweight passenger car with the release of the new HO-scale New Haven 10-window coach, which includes "Easy-Peasy" battery-operated interior lighting.

HO — Rapido Trains, Inc. is celebrating the 75th anniversary of one of the very first lightweight passenger cars with new models in HO scale.

Rapido's first release in the Osgood-Bradley Project is the New Haven 10-window Coach. This car will reportedly be accurately scaled from original blueprints and feature correct tubular cross section with flush windows; full underbody with separate air, steam, and electrical lines; 41-E trucks with prototype-specific journals; full interior detail including bulkhead mirrors; full skirts, partial skirts, or no skirts as appropriate; with or without roof hatches as appropriate; with GE or Frigidaire AC equipment as appropriate; operating diaphragms with end gates; "Easy-Peasy" battery-operated interior lighting; factory-installed separate grab irons; operating MacDonald-Cartier metal knuckle couplers; and up to ten different numbers per paint scheme. The car is rated for minimum radius is 24 inches for full-skirted cars, 18 inches for other cars.

The first-run paint schemes will be for New Haven painted hunter green (as delivered) with full skirts, New Haven painted hunter green (modified) with partial skirts, New Haven painted Pullman green with partial skirts, New Haven painted forest Green (with green frames) with no skirts, and New Haven in the McGinnis Scheme with no skirts; Boston & Maine painted Pullman green with no skirts, Boston Maine painted Maroon/Red with no skirts; Bangor & Aroostook painted Pullman green with no skirts, and undecorated in all skirting variations.

The Osgood Bradly coach is slated for delivery in late 2009 and is expected to retail for $74.95.

Pullman-Standard's Osgood Bradley plant in Worcester, MA began construction of a revolutionary new lightweight coach for the New York, New Haven, and Hartford Railroad in 1934. This design proved very popular, and variations of it were produced for several railroads in the United States. It was also made famous as the basis for tinplate models produced by New Haven's A. C. Gilbert Co. in the 1940s.

Rapido Trains Inc., 140 Applewood Crescent Unit A, Concord, ON L4K 4E2; 905-738-6445; Fax: 905-738-6265; E-mail: jshron@rapidotrains.com; www.rapidotrains.com

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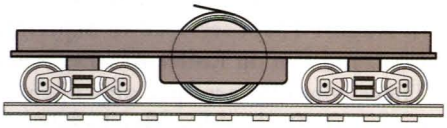

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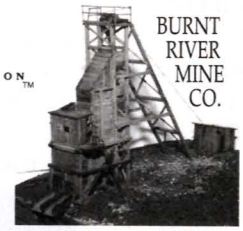

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New Rollingstock from Micro-Trains

Z, N & HON3 — Micro-Trains has released new rollingstock. The following are available in Z-scale: a 40-foot standard boxcar, 9-foot single dome tank cars, two 50-foot standard boxcars, and two 50-foot gondolas; N-scale: a 40-foot standard boxcar, a 60-foot 8-inch Thrall centerbeam flat car, a 50-foot fishbelly flat car, a 39-foot single dome tank car, 40-foot standard boxcar, a three-bay Evans covered hopper, a 50-foot steel side, 14 panel fixed end gondola, a 50-foot auto boxcar, and a 40-foot double-sheathed wood reefer; and for HOn3: a 30-foot composite frame gondola.

Z Scale

A 40-foot standard boxcar with plug door decorated for Wisconsin is the tenth car of a 50-car series representing each of the 50 states in the union. It bears the Robin and Wood Violet, Wisconsin's official state bird and flower. The flag of the state of Wisconsin is in the background. The roadnumber, 1848, represents the year the 'Badger State' was admitted into the union. The boxcar (#502 00 510) retails for $22.95.

Two 39-foot single dome tank cars have been released for Standard Oil Co. AMOX 9756 & AMOX 9758. The cars are painted black with red, white, and blue logo and white lettering. They were built in November 1910, serviced in February 1928, and run on Bettendorf trucks. Established in 1870, Standard Oil operated as a major company trust and was one of the world's first and largest multinational corporations until it was broken up by the United States Supreme Court in 1911. Two of these companies were Jersey Standard (Standard Oil Company of New Jersey), which eventually became Exxon, and SOCONY (Standard Oil Company of New York), which eventually became Mobil. After other mergers and a name change in the 1980s, Standard Oil of California became the Chevron Corporation. The tank cars (#530 00 251 & #530 00 252) retail for $21.80 each.

Two 50-foot standard boxcars with plug doors are now available for B&O. B&O 482680 and B&O 482755 are painted dark blue with aluminum roofs, and yellow logos and lettering. They were built in March 1967 and run on Roller Bearing trucks. These Class B 74-A cars were assembled for B&O at Dubois, PA, from Thrall kits. The 38-inch Capitol Dome logos have been stenciled to the right side of the cars. The boxcars (#507 00 401 & #507 00 402) retail for $23.95 per car.

Two 50-foot gondolas with fishbelly sides and 50-foot gondola rock loads have been released decorated for CSX Transportation. CSXT 497105 and CSXT 497107 are painted blue with yellow logos and lettering and yellow and red "Ease Up" warnings. They were built in August 1966, serviced in September 1987, and run on Roller Bearing trucks. These gondolas are specialty open top cars with fixed sides, fixed ends, and solid bottom. They're equipped with steel cushion underframe and fabricated steel girders for "Coil Steel Only." The gondolas (#522 00 191 & #522 00 192) retail for $25.40 each.

N Scale

A Missouri Pacific 40-foot standard boxcar with single door has been released. It is painted blue with a cream-colored door, white stripe, and red buzz saw logo. MP 46960 was built in 1925 and serviced in October 1951. It runs on Bettendorf trucks. Seven hundred boxcars from this lot were taken at random from three car series: among which, one is the series 46000 – 46999. In 1951 and 1952, they were rebuilt by Missouri Pacific and converted into Eagle Merchandise Service. They were stenciled with the mechanical designation XME, "For merchandise service on MP Lines only." The boxcar (#020 00 806) retails for $24.50.

A 60-foot 8-inch Thrall centerbeam flat car with roof truss load is now available for BNSF. It is painted brown with white lettering. BNSF 559041 was built in July 1978, serviced in June 1998, and runs on Barber Roller Bearing trucks. Centerbeams (or center partition flat cars) are specialty cars designed for carrying bundled building supplies such as roof trusses, wallboard, and fence posts. They must be loaded symmetrically, with half of the payload on one side of the centerbeam and half on the other to avoid tipping over. The flat car (#053 00 070) retails for $26.20.

A 50-foot fishbelly flat car with a front-end loader has been released for Chesapeake & Ohio painted black with white logo and lettering. C&O 216508 was built in July 1942, serviced in July 1964, and runs on Barber Roller Bearing trucks. It was serviced as class FMS, and equipped for auto-frame service. The flat car is minimally stenciled with Futura Demi-Bold lettering and a second-generation 'C&O for Progress' monogram. The flat car (#045 00 360) retails for $16.85.

A 39-foot single dome tank car has been released for Standard Oil Company AMOX 9758. Like the Z-scale cars mentioned previously, it is painted black with a red, white, and blue logo and white lettering. The car was built in November

1910, serviced in February 1928, and runs on Bettendorf trucks. The tank car (#065 00 660) retails for $20.60.

A 40-foot standard boxcar with plug door and no roofwalk commemorating President Van Buren is the eighth car of a 44-car series representing each of the Presidents of the United States. The car bears the portrait of our eighth president, Martin Van Buren. The car comes with a commemorative pin replicated from that era. Van Buren was called the 'Little Magician' and the 'Red Fox of Kinderhook' because he was a wily politician. A political faction headed by Van Buren eventually became the Democratic Party. The boxcar (#074 00 108) retails for $23.95.

A Louis-Dreyfus three-bay Evans covered hopper has been released painted gray with a black and white logo, and black lettering. USLX 20643 was built in October 1978 and runs on Barber Roller Bearing trucks. Louis Dreyfus Commodities is a major trader of grains in the United States, Canada, and Mexico. It is primarily involved with the origination of grains for export due to the large grain crops that are exported into world markets. Evans was a supplier of freight cars, parts and loading devices. Prolific from 1966 until 1982, they built over 37,000 freight cars. An innovative company, their loading devices revolutionized how freight is shipped — they're primarily responsible for the development of the coil steel car design still being built today. The hopper (#099 00 080) retails for $19.15.

A 50-foot steel side, 14 panel fixed end gondola with coil steel load is now available for Pennsylvania Railroad. It is painted freight car red with white logo and

lettering. PRR 376620 was built in January 1952 and runs on Bettendorf trucks. This class G31D gondola was part of a 1,200-car order built by ACF in 1951-1952. Similar to other G31 gondolas, but featuring fixed ends and wooden floors, these revenue service gondolas were always painted standard PRR freight car red with white markings. This gondola exhibits an early PRR paint scheme with "circle-keystone," and "PENNSYLVANIA" letters and rules. This arrangement lasted from 1920-1954. The gondola (#105 00 020) retails for $18.10.

A 50-foot auto boxcar with double sliding doors and end doors has been released for Union Pacific. It is painted red with yellow slogans and white logo and lettering. UP 161106 was built by Union Pacific in Grand Island, NE, in April 1938 and

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runs on Bettendorf trucks. The auto boxcar with double door and end doors design was considered state of the art in the 1930s and 1940s, carrying automobiles on special racks inside for stacking. Unloading was made easier with hinged dreadnaught steel doors at the "A" end of the car. UP introduced slogans to boxcars in 1936 — they were different side to side and were stenciled in yellow with all other lettering stenciled in white. The boxcar (#078 00 030) retails for $20.75.

A 40-foot double-sheathed wood reefer with vertical brakewheel is now available for North Western Refrigerator Line Co., and is painted green and red, with a white and black logo. Lettering is in yellow and black. This reefer runs on Bettendorf trucks. Built in 1927, NWX 15435 ran for nearly 50 years for the North Western Refrigerator Line (NWX). It was last rebuilt at the Baraboo Shops, WI, shortly before that facility closed in 1963. It was retired soon after, when wood reefers were replaced by new a mechanical reefer fleet. The reefer (#049 00 270) retails for $22.85.

HOn3

A 30-foot composite frame gondola with coal load is available for D&RGW 9182, painted boxcar red with a white logo and lettering. It was built in 1887 and runs on Arch Bar trucks. The transport of raw materials in bulk was the major source of traffic and revenue for the Denver & Rio Grande, and most of its lines were built to serve mines and to carry their products to ore processing. All of these commodities were shipped in bulk using coal cars or gondolas. The Rio Grande owned over 3,000 gondolas of various types throughout its existence. Some gondolas built in the 1880s survived until the 1920s, and the last of them disappeared from the roster before 1950. The gondola (#860 00 040) retails for $40.80.

Micro-Trains Line Co., P.O. Box 1200, Talent, OR 97540-1200; 541-535-1755; Fax: 541-535-1932; E-mail: mtl@micro-trains.com; www.micro-trains.com

Smoky Mountain Releases Southern Railway Boxcar in S

S — Smoky Mountain Model Works, Inc. has released a new Pullman-Standard boxcar kit in S scale. The kit features a one-piece urethane body with separate underframe and doors; also included are detail parts, laser-printed decals, color instructions, Kadee 802 couplers, and Barber roller bearing trucks with rotating end caps. Trucks are available separately so modelers can upgrade post-1961 rolling stock. The boxcar kit retails for $80.00.

Southern Railway purchased over 1,000 of these Pullman-Standard boxcars in 1973 – 1974; most are still in operation today in various paint schemes, including Norfolk Southern.

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REVIEW **HO**

The All-Purpose Spine Car

Athearn introduces new Trinity 57-foot Spine Car

Review by Mike Acker
Photos by Mary Acker

Trinity 57-foot All-Purpose Spine Car, MSRP: $89.98
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THE last two decades have seen enormous growth in intermodal traffic volume and with this grew a diverse collection of differing types of containers and trailers. Coinciding with this array of containers was the need for separate specialized railcars to handle them. It was at this point that it became obvious that the intermodal world was in need of a railcar flexible enough to handle both containers and trailers of just about any size.

To meet this challenge, the articulated three-unit, 57-foot All-Purpose Spine Car set was developed by Trinity Industries of Dallas, Texas. These three-car sets were designed for maximum flexibility to handle from 28-foot pup trailers to the 53-foot high capacity trailers, as well as containers ranging from 40- to 53-feet. They also can handle a pair of 20-foot containers as long as they are mounted to a chassis.

The Athearn 57-foot Spine Car

The initial release Athearn's HO-scale All-Purpose Spine Car occurred during the late fall of 2008. This release included six different numbered sets — all in TTX paint and lettering. Also included in this release was an unnumbered set painted in the same TTX yellow. Athearn has already announced another release of six more numbered sets. In conjunction with the Spine Car release, Athearn has also released a line of 53-foot Wabash Duraplate trailers specifically targeted for these new Spine Cars.

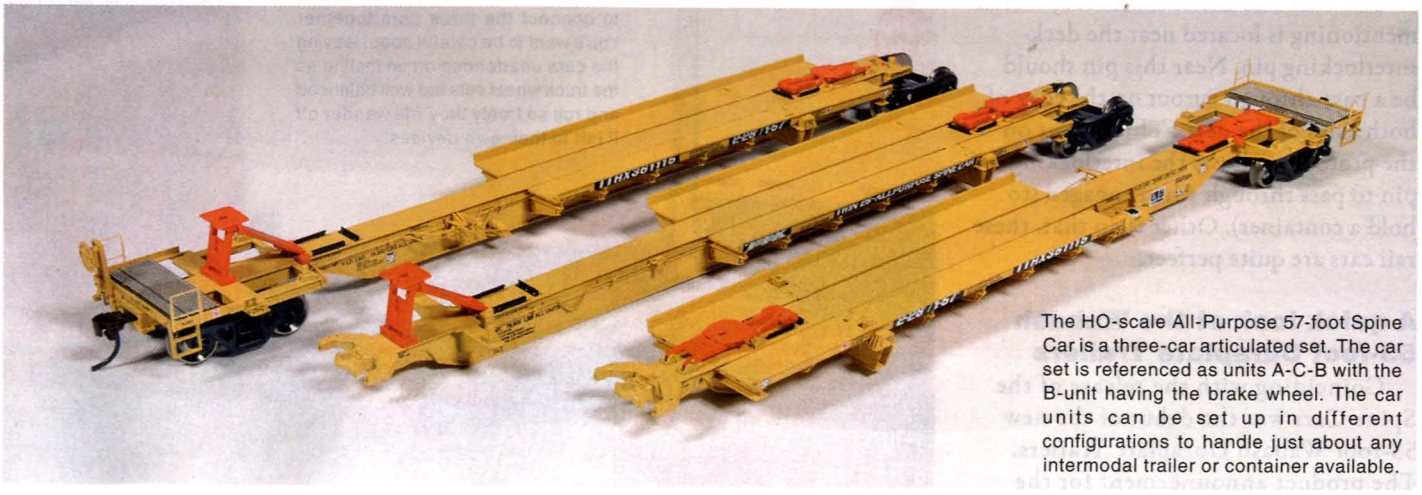
The model itself offers maximum configuration flexibility just like the prototype, but it has its limitations. Each car within the three-car set can be configured to hold any size trailer or container (20-foot containers are limited to chassis-mount), but this flexibility only occurs during the initial configuration, as they were not designed to be reconfigured repeatedly. Included in the package are three identical bags of mounting parts, containing the necessary parts to configure each car to the modeler's choice. Included in each bag are two types of trailer hitches (each in the up position and down position), as well as container mounting shoes and covers. The instructions on the backside of the parts breakdown sheet offer good directions on which parts are needed for each set-up. Depending on which you choose, you will most likely use only half the parts in each bag.

Once you have figured out which configuration you want, you will need a good set of sprue cutters and white glue. Assembly of the parts was straightforward and easy, with the exception of the deck mounted container shoes. One of the shoes required modification to line up properly in the deck slot. Once the cars are assembled, putting them back into the packaging is not a problem because the clearance provided can handle any configuration.

The three cars in the articulated set are designated as units B-C-A with the end units assigned A and B. The cars are sturdy with the spine frame and end walkway support all one diecast metal assembly. This diecast frame gives the rail car enough weight for stability and proper tracking on the rails. The three articulated units connect to each other using a kingpin on the shared truck. The cars come with McHenry couplers, but the coupler pockets are standard-size allowing easy replacement if desired. The truck wheel sets are well balanced and roll freely and smoothly. The combination of the free-rolling trucks and the fact the majority of the car weight is concentrated on the centerline results in a car that rolls very easily. This caused some problems during the review — there were a few instances of the cars nearly rolling off the inspection table.

Detailing on the Spine Cars

The detailing on these cars is nothing less than superb. Airline piping is provided throughout all three cars with the use of numerous pre-formed wires. The end A- and B-units contain the main air reservoirs with piping and supporting hardware which is well done, but the star of this show is located on the opposite side of the frame. Here you will find an impressive combination of piping, pipe brackets, an auxiliary reservoir, a retaining valve, and triple valve. One of the pipes from the triple valve is chan-



The HO-scale All-Purpose 57-foot Spine Car is a three-car articulated set. The car set is referenced as units A-C-B with the B-unit having the brake wheel. The car units can be set up in different configurations to handle just about any intermodal trailer or container available.

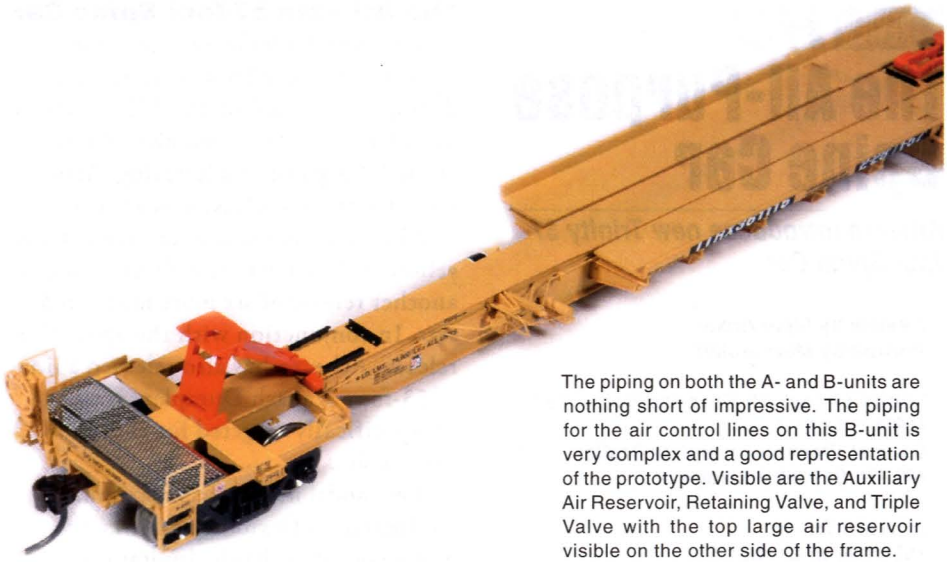
neled through the frame to the large air reservoir on the other side. The outside ends of the A- and B-cars features a photo-etched walkway, wire grab irons, and thin upright climb-on grabs made of flexible plastic. Other notable details are the threaded trailer wheel support decks and the photo-etched kick plates near the trailer hitches.

When compared to the prototype, these Spine Cars are strikingly accurate. They were compared with dozens of close-up and full view prototype pictures and without a doubt came through with flying colors. A high level of attention to detail is evident throughout. Even the subtle physical change in the width of the spine frame is captured with the frame widening at the point it comes in contact with the deck. The integral air piping running between the air reservoirs and valves on the A- and B-units is accurately piped from source to destination.

Taking out the magnifying glass reveals many more goodies such as nut-bolt-washers located under the end unit grab irons and the brake wheel chain assembly under the frame sill. A close look at the Auxiliary Reservoir bracket will reveal that they included the small hand-activated air valve.

The etched walkway also emulates the prototype well with the size and shape of the platform, especially the formed bends of the inside edge. The printing on the car set is accurate as well as very readable (with the help of a magnifying glass). One will find even the smallest placards, warning, and information stencils readable. Nearly all of the lettering matches the prototype pictures with only a few exceptions, but these may vary between prototypes.

The only real detail inaccuracy worth mentioning is located near the deck-interlocking pin. Near this pin should be a pass-through cutout on the edge of both sides of the deck. This cutout on the prototype allows the interlocking pin to pass through when engaged (to hold a container). Other than that, these rail cars are quite perfect.

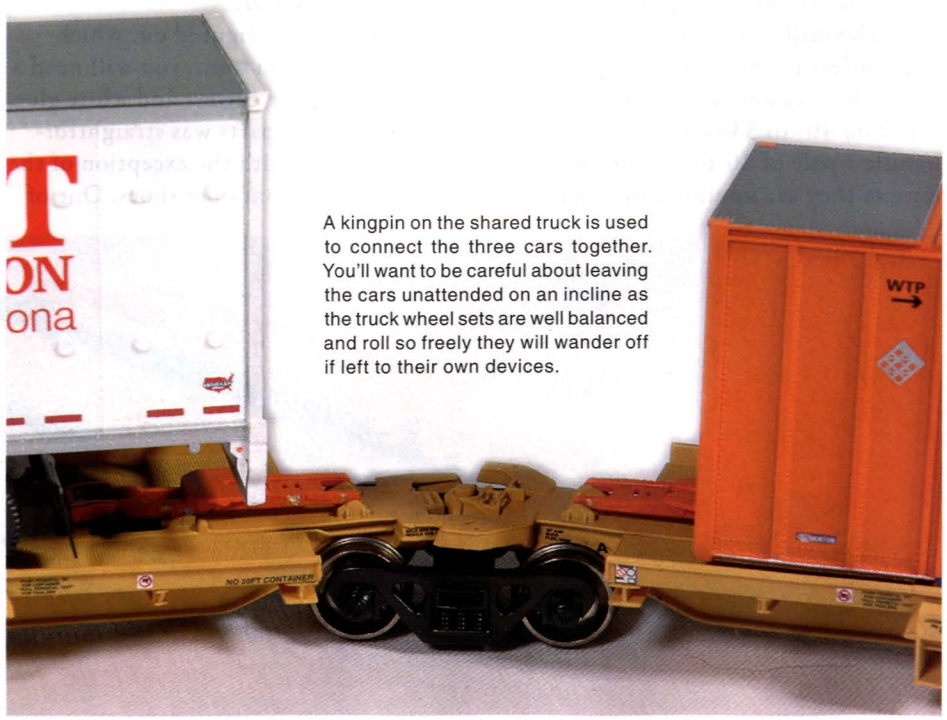


The piping on both the A- and B-units are nothing short of impressive. The piping for the air control lines on this B-unit is very complex and a good representation of the prototype. Visible are the Auxiliary Air Reservoir, Retaining Valve, and Triple Valve with the top large air reservoir visible on the other side of the frame.

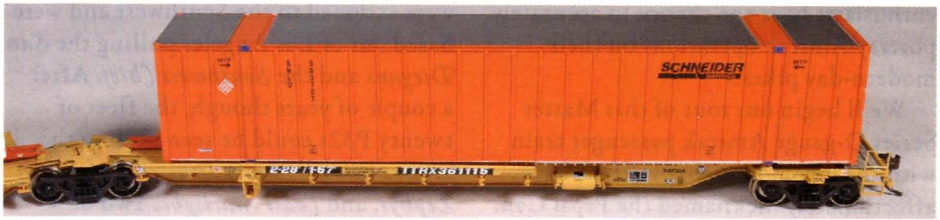
A quick look at the Wabash 53-foot Duraplate Trailers

Coinciding with the release of the Spine Cars was the debut of the new 53-foot Wabash Duraplate Trailers. The product announcement for the trailers stated that this trailer "goes with the new 57-foot Spine Car." This release featured two 53-foot trailers per pack, in six different trucking company operator names and available in two separate number sets. The truck company names include: Dart Advantage, Knight Transportation, Schneider, Swift, US Express, and Werner. This release also featured a painted but un-lettered Owner/Operator style trailer. The trailers are fairly modern and can be found hauling freight for a variety of trucking companies and independents nationwide. These trailers can be used behind a tractor or in our case, mounted on the Spine Car.

The trailers are the upgraded tooling of the former A-Line trailers. They are well detailed with most of the details in the landing gear and wheel base assembly. The landing gear is constructed of four different parts that includes a small well-cast hand jack handle. The wheel base assembly consists of an adjustable wheel bogie (frame), tiny mud flaps, and nicely detailed wheels with visible spokes and rubber tires. The paintwork is of the highest quality with solid colors and great separation between them. The company lettering, safety, and information placards are very nicely applied on each trailer sample. The most impressive example of finish quality is at the rear of each trailer with the multitude of placards, logos,



A kingpin on the shared truck is used to connect the three cars together. You'll want to be careful about leaving the cars unattended on an incline as the truck wheel sets are well balanced and roll so freely they will wander off if left to their own devices.



Spine A-unit with a 53-foot container. These cars can handle 40-, 45-, 48-, and 53-foot containers They can also carry two 20-foot containers, but the shorties must be mounted on a chassis.

Spine C-unit with a new 53-foot Wabash Duraplate trailer. These cars can handle two 28-foot pup trailers or any other trailer up to the large capacity 53-foot trailer. The new Knight Transportation trailer was one of six released specifically for use on the new spine cars.

Spine B-unit with a new 53-foot Wabash Duraplate trailer decorated for Werner Enterprises. These trailers were released to coincide with the new spine cars and come in six different company names as well as an unlettered owner/operator version.

reflective striping, and the separately painted door latches and hinges.

These are good-looking trailers with just the right amount of necessary details. These trailers work just as advertised on the Spine Car and make a great load. To mount them is only a matter of configuring the Spine Car with the square hitch raised and the rounded hitch in the lowered position. Once the trailer is placed with the pin in the hitch and the wheels on the deck it pretty well stays in place during operation.

A New Standard

The Athearn release of the new Trinity 57-foot All-Purpose Spine Cars sets a new standard for this type of intermodal car. The Spine Cars are accurate, functional, highly detailed, and drop-dead gorgeous. What else could you ask for? This model fills a gap in intermodal model railroading which, prior to this release, has not been covered well. Combine these cars with the new Wabash trailers, for a mighty fine looking consist. With these new Spine Cars you are now all set to handle just about anything your intermodal facility has for you to ship.

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REVIEW O

Modeling Amtrak with Atlas O

Updated Dash 8 and Horizon cars add modern look and feel to O-scale

Review and Photos by David Otte

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WITH the huge fascination that model railroaders have for passenger trains these days, it's hard to believe that this country's only current-day continental passenger service, Amtrak, is so poorly represented in O gauge. Chiefly, ready-to-run 2-rail and 3-rail scale-length passenger cars based on Amtrak prototypes are hard to find, appear only briefly in a manufacturer's catalog, and sell out quickly when they hit store shelves. Fortunately, Atlas O has taken note of this dire situation and recently reissued their Horizon passenger cars, which were originally released back in 1999. Along with these cars comes some matching motive power in the form of the Dash 8-32BHW diesel locomotive, also a re-release. Once again, scale-oriented 2-rail and 3-rail enthusiasts have the chance to accurately portray Amtrak operations on their modern-day pikes.

We'll begin our tour of this Master Series O-gauge Amtrak passenger train with the locomotive that railfans have affectionately nicknamed the Pepsi Can.

Amtrak's Dash 8-32BHW

It was about 1990 when Amtrak began looking for a locomotive builder to take their motive power needs into the next century. General Electric won the bid with their radical design of what would become known as the Genesis locomotive or AMD-103. However, Amtrak was in immediate need of supplementing their aging fleet of F40PHs. Part of the deal with GE was that the locomotive manufacturer would deliver 20 interim locomotives by the middle of 1991. The Erie, Pennsylvania-based company turned to their popular Dash 8-40B series for a starting place. Redesigning a freight locomotive for passenger use was not new to the industry, but GE had to meet Amtrak's weight and operations criteria too. First, the 4,000 horsepower 16-cylinder power plant was replaced with a lighter weight 12-cylinder prime mover, the FDL 12, capable of producing 3,200 horsepower. A second alternator rated at 800 kW was added for head-end power and a wide safety cab similar to those used on Santa Fe's new Dash 8-40BWs was utilized. The fuel tank was also adjusted in size and placed further back on the underframe to keep the locomotive balanced. With a gear ratio of 74:29, the Dash 8-32BHW or P32BH, as Amtrak would call the new passenger engine, could reach speeds of 103 miles per hour.

Carrying the 500 series roadnumbers (500 – 519), the P32s entered service in the fall of 1991. Originally the units were assigned to the Southwest and were based out of Los Angeles pulling the *San Diegans* and the *Southwest Chief*. After a couple of years though, the fleet of twenty P32s could be seen pulling the *Desert Wind*, *Sunset Limited*, *California Zephyr*, and *Coast Starlight*. Two of the P32s were financed by the state of California and used by the California Department of Transportation and have since been renumbered out of the series. With the delivery of the Genesis locomotives, the P32s were relegated to other duties and currently can be found pulling a variety of local and long distance trains, as well as being used for standby power and switching duties throughout the Midwest and on the West Coast.

Atlas O's Pepsi Can

As you might expect, the passenger Dash 8s are very similar in the level of detail and accuracy as Atlas O's earlier releases. Dimensionally, the 15.625-inch-long (over the pilots) replica matches published drawings of the prototype very closely. The ABS hood and cab shells are rich with molded-in details, as are the diecast metal underframe, fuel tank, trucks, and pilots. One of the neatest details that showcases Atlas O's tooling abilities is that you can see the profile of the radiator cooling fan shroud molded-in behind the angled radiator air intake grilles. Our Amtrak P32 review sample also displayed all the separately applied goodies for which the company has become known, like wire hand grabs, metal railing and stanchions, air reservoir tanks, a snowplow, MU hoses, coupler lift bars, five-chime air horn, rooftop antenna, hand brake wheel, painted crew figures seated in the cab, window glazing, windshield wipers, sunshades (not really correct for an Amtrak Dash 8) and, last but not least, expertly rendered

Atlas O's re-issue of the Dash 8-32BHW has been updated with their EOB speed control system and Amtrak's latest Phase V paint scheme. Like the original release models, the O-scale Pepsi Can features TMCC, RailSounds 4.0, a fan-driven exhaust unit, ElectroCouplers, and some neat lighting effects. Its truck mounted, flywheel-equipped motors and traction tires provide ample muscle for pulling a string of Horizon passenger cars.

GE floating bolster trucks with add-on brake cylinders and air lines plus the hand brake chain on the left rear sideframe and speed recorder and cable on the left front sideframe.

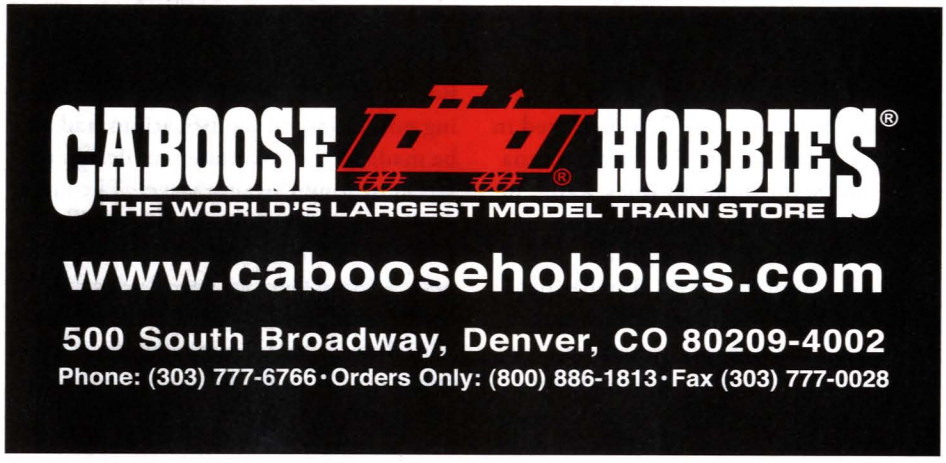
Unlike its GE freight version counterparts, which Atlas O has also produced, the real Amtrak Dash 8s display additional ride dampeners on the trucks, a blanked out section on the radiator exhaust grille, a smaller fuel tank with battery box and air reservoir tanks mounted in front of it, end-of-train light between the cab number boards for when running in reverse, class lights on both the nose and rear hood end, and a windowless cab nose door (the Santa Fe's Dash 8-40BWs have windows in the doors). The Atlas O model exhibits these same attributes with the added detail of an opening nose door with working handle. How's that for authenticity!

When it comes to decoration, I'll have to admit the as-delivered red, white, and blue stripe scheme, which earned the P32s their Pepsi Can nickname, is my favorite paint scheme. However, it only lasted up until 2000 when Amtrak began repainting these units into the Phase IV or Northeast Corridor scheme. The current scheme, as correctly displayed on our number 510 (also available as number 500), is known as the Phase V variation featuring the newer Amtrak wave logo, which first appeared on the Dash 8 locomotives in 2006. They have retained their moniker nonetheless with names such as Diet Pepsi Cans reflecting the more subdued Phase IV appearance and, for the newest decoration, Crystal Pepsi Cans. Whatever you care to call them, the Atlas O reproduction is well done, as always, with a perfect paint finish and laser-sharp graphics, which are only enhanced by the tiny, but readable warning placards dotting the carbody and GE builder's plate on the right side of the cab.

As much as I enjoy the motive power pulling this consist, it's really the passenger cars themselves that warrant most of the excitement regarding Atlas O's latest efforts.

New Equipment on the Horizon

Amtrak first unveiled their new fleet of passenger cars on April 11, 1989, but the history of the Horizon equipment can actually be traced back to an old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P32BH
number 510 first
received Phase V paint in 2006
and has been serving the past 12 months on
the west coast from Santa Barbara, California to
Vancouver, Washington leading locals and working in helper service
behind the P42DCs. All twenty of the 500 class are still on the roster with the majority
of the units currently based out of Chicago, Illinois. Atlas O has captured the paint and lettering
characteristics of this subtle, but classy Amtrak scheme perfectly and to their usual high quality.

Pullman Standard design known as the Comet. These cars were first produced in the early 1960s for the Erie Lackawanna to use on their commuter lines. Later, in the mid 1980s, these cars went through a re-design phase resulting in the Comet II. Montreal-based Bombardier Corporation, who had purchased the manufacturing rights to these cars, began production of the Comet II for many of the commuter railroads including New Jersey Transit, Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority (SEPTA), and Metro Boston Transit.

When Amtrak found themselves in need of both additional cars to bolster their roster of Amfleet cars as well as finding permanent replacements for their aging Heritage fleet, they turned to Bombardier's Comet II coach as a starting point. Several modifications had to be made to the commuter car design to facilitate long-distance travel. The most noticeable changes externally are the side and end door configurations and the better-riding General Steel Industries' coil sprung trucks as used on Amtrak's Superliner II cars. Internally, the coaches could seat 77 to 82 passengers and were equipped with automatic end doors for easy passenger movement between cars, two restrooms at one end of every car, and overhead luggage racks. The cars measured 85-feet 3-inches in length, 10-feet 6-inches wide, and weighed over 100,000 pounds. Of the 104-car order that Amtrak placed with Bombardier, 86 were coaches and 18 were food-service cars. Today, the Horizon cars can be seen in use on many intermediate-distance trains throughout the Midwest and Western United States.

The Atlas O Horizon Cars

Right out of the box, I was impressed with just how long these Atlas O cars appeared! At 21.25 inches long over the buffer plates of the diaphragms, they are reproduced to full-scale length, one of the few modern passenger car models on the market today that can boast such a fact! Their other general dimensions also matched published data of the prototype to an exacting degree.

The O-scale coach and dinette models are constructed with a durable injection-molded carbody attached to a sturdy

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stamped metal frame. All the major characteristics of the Horizon cars can be identified on the two models including the smooth car sides and corrugated roof, the appropriate window locations for both prototypes, non-functioning end and side doors with exposed steps, and molded-in rooftop vents and drip rails over the vestibule doors. Underbody details are also represented with unique equipment displayed properly under the dinette car. Finally, black rubber diaphragms have been factory installed on either end of the cars.

Some of the more notable details on the Atlas O models include: separately applied wire hand grabs, the representation of black window gaskets around all the windows, and full car interiors. Both styles of cars have the suitable coach-style seats or tables and chairs, and are molded in blue plastic. The diecast four-wheel trucks are very good copies of the Superliner II trucks and are equipped with metal wheels and axles.

The assembly and decoration of the Horizon cars was as to be expected on an Atlas O model — superb! The Horizon cars were originally delivered in the Amtrak Phase III paint scheme of equal width red, white, and blue bands on a silver mist body. However, the current scheme, as displayed on our review samples and known as Phase IVb, features a silver carbody with two thin red stripes over a white background that is applied over a wide blue stripe running through the windows. An Amtrak wave logo and red frame pin stripe finishes off the decoration. Once again, Atlas O hits the mark with their reproduction of the scheme giving these cars a top quality paint job with an ultra-smooth paint application and clean parting lines between the patriotic bands of color. All colors appeared to be opaque including the lettering, which was extremely crisp and completely legible down to the small "Emergency Access" labels below some of the windows. Atlas O is offering their coach in four different roadnumbers and the dinette in two roadnumbers as well as in the older Phase IV scheme.

As we have come to expect from an Atlas O Master Series product, their Dash 8-32BHW is constructed to exacting scale dimensions and features numerous add-on detail parts, as can be seen in this view of the safety cab. Also take note of the GE builder's plate on the frame beneath the cab and the nicely rendered GE floating bolster trucks.

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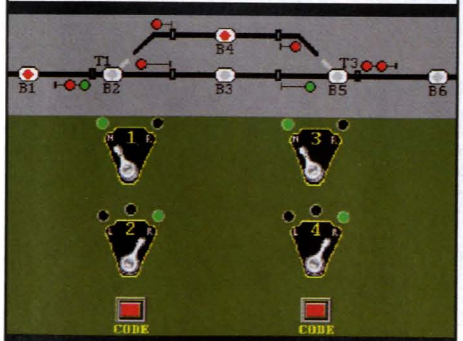

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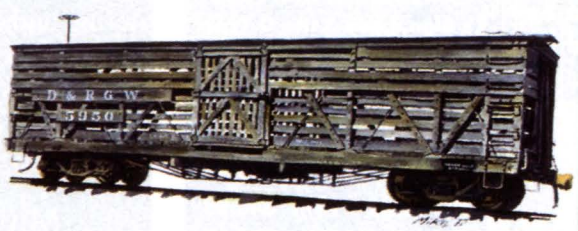

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Atlas O has re-released both their Horizon coach and dinette cars in Amtrak's current Phase IVb passenger car scheme. The welcomed return of these 85-foot scale length cars to the market offers the modern-era O scaler the chance to model passenger trains again.

The O-gauge Amtrak Consist in Revenue Service

As with previous releases, the Atlas O Amtrak locomotive is equipped with two can motors with flywheels, is all-wheel drive, and comes equipped with TrainMaster Command Control and RailSounds 4.0. Our review model operated without a hitch on our test layout configured with O36 diameter curves: the minimum radius suggested by Atlas O. The Engineer On Board (EOB) speed control system, which was not present on the original P32 release in 2003, kept the unit running smoothly and at consistent speeds down to a minimum of 3 scale miles per hour. On a larger layout incorporating O72 minimum curves, the Dash 8 managed a train of five Atlas O Horizon coaches plus 9 more scale-sized freight cars.

As always, the RailSound system provided for a great audio presence on the layout with a rich sounding diesel roar and realistic horn and bell. The model also features ElectroCouplers allowing remote uncoupling anywhere on the layout and a great operating exhaust unit, which provided plenty of smoke when the locomotive was in motion and automatically decreased output when it was at idle.

Finally, we come to the lighting effects on this model. Besides the usual directionally controlled front and rear headlights, the model is also equipped with pilot mounted ditch lights, which are very visibly bright white LEDs that flash momentarily when the horn is blown. In addition to this, the Atlas O engine has directionally controlled working red marker lamps and an end of train light between the front numberboards for when operating in reverse.

Regarding the passenger consist, coupling them up to the Atlas O Dash 8, we sent our 3-rail review sample set around the test track to see how they performed. The most important thing to remember about these cars is that they are l-o-n-g! So make sure you have enough clearance on either side of right-of-ways near curves and around switches. Although the minimum-operating radius is O54, there is still quite a bit of overhang.

While no problems were encountered on our O54 radius test track, the cars looked much better on O72 curves. The cars rolled smoothly right out of the box, but the manufacturer does recommend lubricating the axles where they meet the bearings in the side frames as well as the center rail roller pickups with a light oil. The manual operating, truck mounted, metal couplers worked well, too, with no unintended uncoupling accidents to report.

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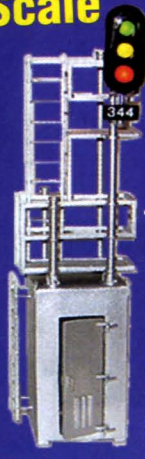

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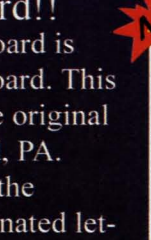

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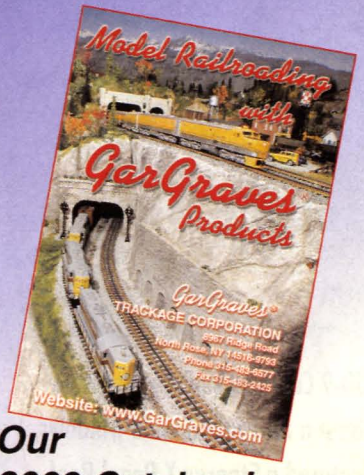
A nice feature of the Atlas O Horizon fleet is the interior illumination. Atlas O has designed this system with overhead lighting to give a more realistic look to the cars and the results looked great with the interiors glowing nicely visible even in a well-lit room. There is a third rail roller pickup mounted beneath each truck, which aids in keeping the car lighting from flickering too much while moving over track joints and through switches. Also, located on one end of each car, are operating end-of-train lights (the opposite ends have lenses, but they do not function.) The bright, red lights may be turned on or off depending on the position of the passenger car in your consist by means of a slide switch on the underside of the car.

While we only tested the 3-rail versions of the Master Series Amtrak equipment, 2-rail models are also available. In this format, the Gold Edition locomotive comes equipped with a factory-installed DCC decoder and QSI sound system, scale wheelsets, fixed pilots, and Kadee compatible knuckle couplers. Likewise, the 2-rail Horizon cars include 33-inch scale wheelsets and body-mounted Kadee compatible couplers. Both models require a minimum 36-inch radius curve.

The manufacturer's attention to detail shows on this close up of the Horizon dinette's car end. Note the rubber diaphragms, wire hand holds, tinted window glazing surrounded by simulated black window gaskets, and working end-of-train marker lights. Also visible are the correct Superliner II style trucks fabricated in diecast metal and outfitted with metal wheels and axles.

Now Departing on Track 1

To paraphrase this welcomed return of Atlas O's Amtrak models: same great models, same great quality, and fresh new paint schemes. Toping off the availability of the Amtrak equipment, the manufacturer is also offering the commuter versions of these cars, the Comet II coach and cab car, in a variety of roadnames so O scalers can further expand their passenger train operations beyond Amtrak. For more information and pricing on these offerings, go to www.atlaso.com. If you regret missing these models the first time around, I wouldn't hesitate in seeking them out now at your local dealer. I expect this passenger consist to depart the station just as fast as did the original run!



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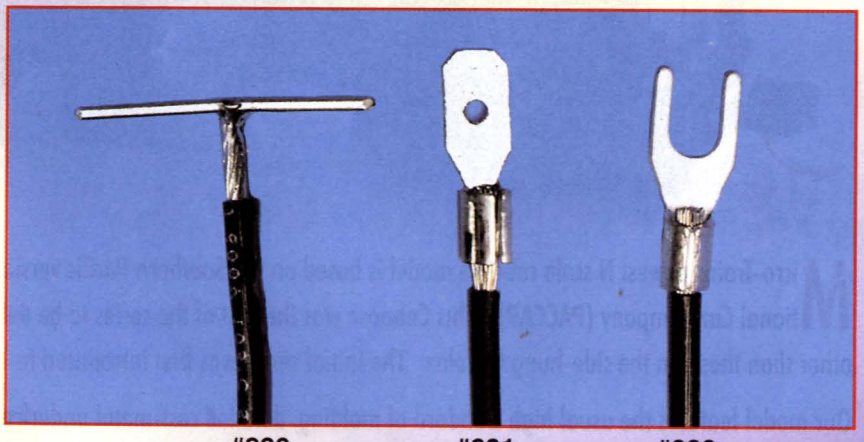

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New Canadian National K5a 4-6-4 Brass Steamer

O — Weaver has announced their upcoming Canadian National K5a 4-6-4 steam locomotive in brass. The model will feature 1/4-inch dimensions and is said to be operational on 0-42 Curves (2-Rail = 36 inch Radius).

According to Weaver Models, the brass body will feature an authentic paint scheme, multiple cab numbers, lighted number boards, constant voltage headlight, constant voltage backup light, front operating classification lights, sprung drive wheels, operational cab vents, enclosed all-weather cab, firebox glow, TA studios fan driven smoke unit, tender hatches that open allowing for easy access to volume control with Sound On / Sound Off Switch, Precision DC can motor, flywheel coasting.

Weaver Models is releasing a Brass K5a 4-6-4 in O scale. Reservations are being taken now and the model is expected in the fall of 2009.

Modelers have the choice of 2-rail without sound for $995.00, or the choice of 2-rail (AC) or 3-rail with rail sounds, TrainMaster Command Control, and Engineer On Board Speed Control for $1095.00. 3-Rail with Sound units also feature rear electronic coil coupler. Orders are currently being accepted for a Fall 2009 delivery.

Weaver Models - Scalecoat Paint, P.O. Box 231, Northumberland, PA 17857-0231; 570-473-9434; Fax: 570-473-3293; E-mail: customerservice@weavermodels.com; www.weavermodels.com

N SCALE BAY WINDOW CABOOSE

*Pre-production sample shown

Micro-Trains newest N scale caboose model is based on the Southern Pacific version of the C50-9 Caboose built by International Car Company (PACCAR). This Caboose was the first of the series to be delivered without a roofwalk or side windows, other than those on the side-hung Cupolas. The initial series was first introduced in 1970 and featured a Stanray X Panel Roof.

Our model features the usual high standard of molding, detailed cast-metal underframe which sports a separate battery box, window inserts and body mount Magne-Matic® couplers for smooth, reliable operation. End rails are etched stainless steel with separate brake detail for accurate scale width and appearance.

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N® SCALE 1:160

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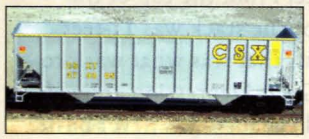

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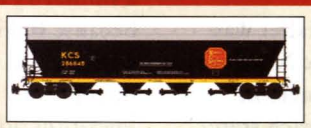

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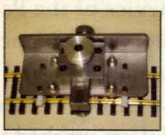
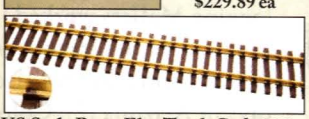
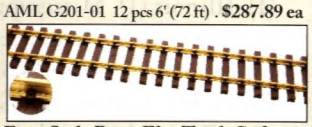




US Style Brass Flex Track Code 332
AML G201-01 12 pcs 6' (72 ft) . $287.89 ea



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Cover Story

REVIEW Large (1:20.3)

Bachmann Delivers Old-Time Fn3 2-6-6-2

1:20.3 Logging Mallet joins Spectrum Line

Review and Photos by John Sipple

Logging Mallet 2-6-6-2 steam locomotive, MSRP: $1,250.00

Bachmann Industries
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By-The-Numbers

2-6-6-2 Logging Mallet
Bachmann
LSF 1:20.3 • Type: Steam
Traction Tires? No

Pull Power (Ozs @ Full Slip)

Pull	÷	Loco Wt	=	Efficiency
57.6		190		30.3%
Volts		Amps		
18		4.1		

Analog DC

Start Volts = 6

Volts	Amps	Scale MPH
7.7	0.67	3.6
12.0	1.3	11.8
20.0	1.4	39.9

DCC

Speed	Step (of 128)	Scale MPH
Min	1	3.6
Mid	63	23
Top	126	37.6

ANATOLE MALLET was a Belgian engineer with an idea. He looked at the steam locos available in the 1880s and 90s and saw an opportunity. Compound use of steam was a practice by that point, but it was usually applied to parallel pistons, such as the Vauclain Compounds. He had another idea. Railroaders wanted to get two steam locomotives under the control of a single engine crew, and experiments in this direction had mixed results. He proposed sending high pressure steam to a fixed rear engine with high-pressure pistons, and the exhaust steam from these would go forward to an engine that could swing left and right. It would have larger, low pressure cylinders.

C&O purchased #1600, an 0-6-6-0, in 1904. The "Mallet" (pronounced Malley) was on its way. Big railroads set out to make them ever bigger until they produced 2-8-8-2s, 2-10-10-2s, Triplexes, and ultimately the 4-8-8-4s in their quest for ever more power in the single engineer's hand. Less noticeable were the logging Mallets. Back in 1909, Baldwin erected a pair of 2-4-4-2 loggers. The next year, three 2-6-6-2s, and a 2-4-4-2 were sold, including the first 2-6-6-2T "tank" or "tenderless" Mallet. Ten long years would pass before the next logging Mallet. So it went, in hit-or-miss fashion until the last three logging Mallets were built in 1937. A total of 42 logging articulateds were built, mostly 2-6-6-2s and 27 of them were tank types. Seventeen of them belonged to Weyehauser at one time or the other.

The logging/industrial Mallet was mainly a device of the Pacific Northwest. Some of them made appearances in more than one state, and so each state/country is counted. Thus, 30 different logging Mallets worked in Washington, 11 operated in Oregon, and five cruised in California, but we also have sightings in Arizona (2), Colorado (2), Idaho (1), Illinois (1), Mississippi (1), South Dakota (1), and Tennessee (1). Seen in other countries were Mallets in British Columbia, Canada (2), Guatemala (2), New Zealand (1), and the Philippines (1). Machines proposed but never built aren't on this list.

In 1928, Biles-Coleman Lumber Company approached Baldwin about producing a 3-foot narrow gauge version of the 2-6-6-2T. It was to have 38-inch drivers, rear pistons 17 x 20 inches and front cylinders 21 x 20 inches, and a boiler pressure of 200 pounds. It would weigh 180,000 pounds with a tractive effort of 23,100 pounds, carry 700 gallons of fuel oil in a tank behind the cab, and 1,500 gallons of water in the split saddle tanks. It was 38-feet 3-inches from end plate to end plate. From the top of the rails to the top of the stack was 11-feet 6-inches. At least, that was what was proposed, but the Great Depression arrived with a crash and the loco was never built.

She would have been rather unusual, since it was proposed that the high-pressure steam from the superheater would exit the smoke box ahead of the stack and just below it on both sides. The lagged pipes would wend their way straight back into the saddle tanks and then downward into the rear high-pressure cylinder. Aside from the two very different Uintah Railway 3-foot gauge 2-6-6-2T engines, the Biles-Coleman proposal was the only other narrow gauge 2-6-6-2T ever considered.

Bachmann's Fn3 Mallet

As such locos go, this was a small one. With a tractive effort of 23,100 pounds, it seems to be a little light in the loafers, but that was actually a good thing. At 90 tons, it was in the same weight category as an industrial Mikado and considerably heavier than a two-truck Shay that produced comparable tractive effort. It tiptoed lightly on the rails it ran.

If you look at a lot of photos and drawings of logging Mallets, there is a similarity about them, in large part because Baldwin's catalog offered them with a basic structure and some interesting options. The loco was a form-follows-function success. Geared locos such as Shays, Heislers, and Climaxes were high-pull-low speed machines. Getting empties up to the McGiffert loaders in the woods and pulling down the loads was good work for geared steamers, but getting a string of log cars from the woods down to the mill was another job, entirely. If the average geared loco topped out around 12 to 15 miles per hour, the Mallets were good for more like 25 to 30.

Our sample looks very much the part with its split saddle tanks, large domes, and the fuel bunker in the back. It comes equipped with the coal load, but a long oil tank insert can take its place with just a couple of minutes'

Cute as all get-out; that's what I see! From this angle, it's clear that the high-pressure pipes couldn't run under the air pumps and the footboards, so the only place left is up near the stack. I've seen photos of logging Mallets in charge of a string of excursion passenger cars, too.

In reverse, the Mallet becomes a Cab-Forward. There are four wires coming from the engine compartment into the empty fuel bunker for user applications. In short, batteries could be stored there, and you don't have to thread wires! The boxy thing between the two boiler domes is the water fill manifold.

work. Since our copy models the Oregon Lumber Company 121, oil would be right, because Washington, Oregon, and California had laws requiring oil burners by the 1920s in an effort to keep down the number of loco-sparked forest fires. The Baldwin proposal suggested this machine would have been limited to grades no steeper than 5 percent and curves no tighter than 30 degrees. That, of course, was the point. The average Mikado in the 90 ton class wouldn't negotiate tighter than 20 degrees and would have struggled on 4 percent grades while having a heavier axle loading.

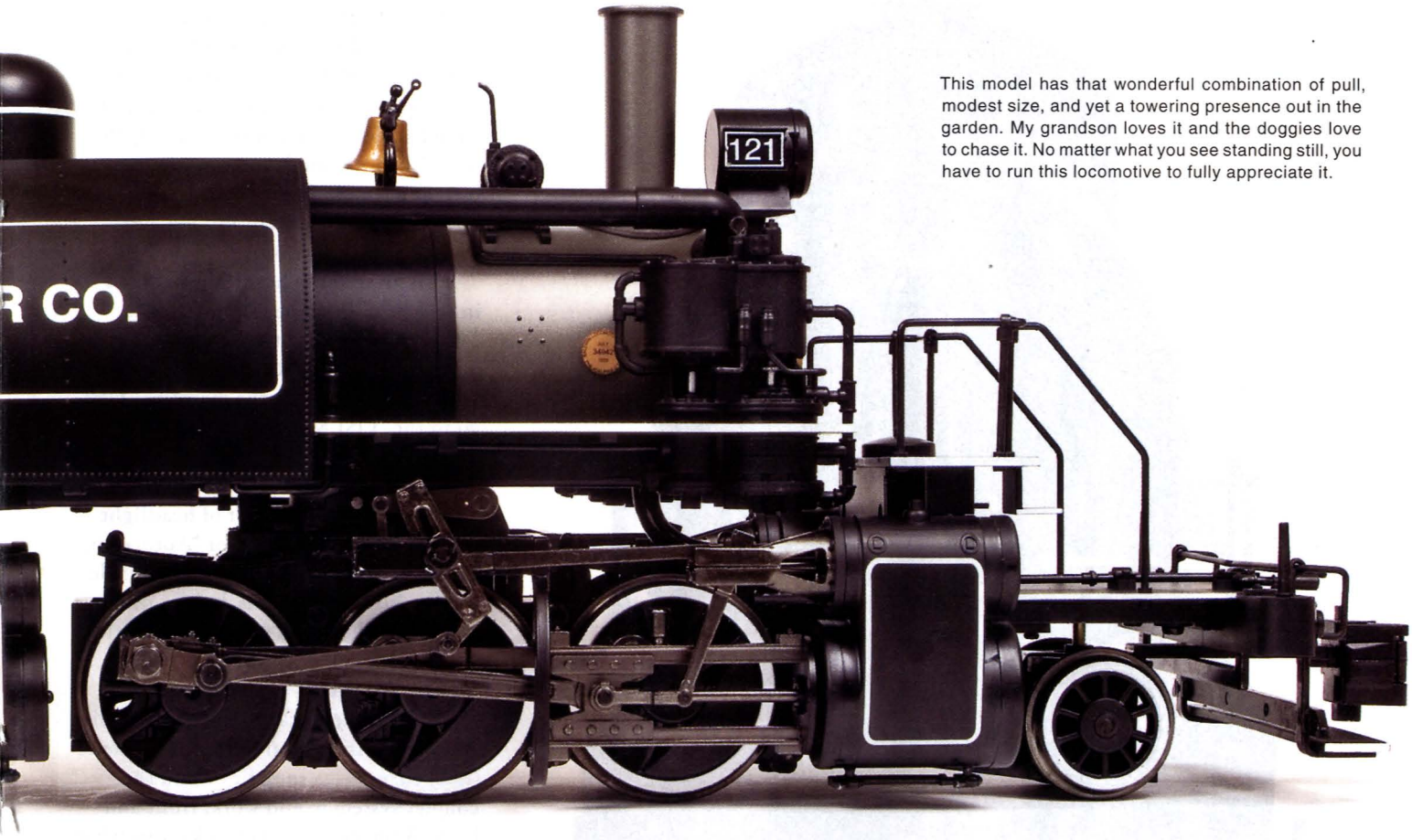
Bachmann has fleshed out this machine and accessorized it very nicely. Not in the original Proposal No. 8043 are the air pumps, foot walks, a sand dome, front deck sandbox, directional lights, and other features. While the proposal specified Walschaerts valve gear, both engines of the model feature Baker, fixed at neutral cut-off.

Our sample is beautifully painted and detailed, what we have come to expect from Bachmann. All of the key running gear parts are metal and authoritative in appearance. Our Oregon Lumber Company #121 isn't a real loco, since this South Baker, Oregon-based company was served by the Sumpter Valley Railroad, which did own the two Uintah Mallets for a time. In fact, due to the fantasy nature of the Biles-Coleman never-built Mallet, all of the other roads produced are also make-believe roster entries. Bachmann is offering the logging Mallet as Little River Logging Co., Yellow Pine Lumber Co., Oregon Lumber Co., West Virginia Paper & Pulp Co., plus two painted/unlettered versions.

Details are excellent and entirely consistent with other logging Mallets. By the late twenties, all of them would have dual airpumps, and the usual location for them was on the opposite side of the smokebox. In fact, their placement is probably what displaced the high-pressure pipes to their high location. The dynamo is just behind the stack while the bell is just behind that. The saddle tank is split with a filling manifold bridging between them. The sand and steam domes are in between the saddle tanks while the turret is behind all that, just in front of the cab.

As is customary with Bachmann, the cab interior is detailed, the doors swing open or shut, and the side windows and a front window slide. Inexplicably, the rear windows of the cab are not glazed, though I have plans for that. The front headlight is ahead of the stack while the rear one is atop the cab roof. Railings are metal and nicely formed, the walkways are textured, and the footboards are simulated wood.

I took up measuring devices and determined the loco is 22-13/16 inches across the end plates above the footboard, 6-7/8 inches from top of the rail to top of the stack (extreme height is just under eight inches to the top of the rear headlight), and has an extreme width of 5.25 inches across the front cylinders. Given that the little rascal may swing left and right some while the rear engine swings the opposite way, I'd give her six inches to be on the safe side. This all works out to around a scale 38-feet 7-inches long, 11-feet 7.5-inches tall at the stack (13.5 feet at the rear headlight),



This model has that wonderful combination of pull, modest size, and yet a towering presence out in the garden. My grandson loves it and the doggies love to chase it. No matter what you see standing still, you have to run this locomotive to fully appreciate it.

and 8-feet 10.5-inches wide. For a 3-foot narrow gauge machine, this all squares up nicely.

DC Operation

My first run was with the locomotive on straight DC, and she's a real corker. Bachmann has endowed our girl with a vertical motor on each engine, so each one turns at its own speed, causing the running gear to go in and out of sync in the unpredictable manner of Mallets. For me, it was love at first sight. I have this ten-car train made up of Bachmann Fn3 cars, a perfect match. My two-truck Shay can haul this train over my 5.5 percent curve-adjusted grades and the ten-foot standard curves would be close to 30 degrees, so the Shay has always had her work cut out for her, though she handles the train with slow grace.

While I had to give the Mallet a lot of throttle, it walked this same train around the layout without a problem. At around 17.5 volts, it managed the train without slipping or stalling. The factory-installed couplers played nice with the Oregon Pine Belt Railway's standard Kadees and also liked working with the only Fn3 car still in Bachmann's new standard couplers. I was so pleased that I installed a QSI Solutions sound decoder in the Aristo-style plug, which is found by lifting up on the two domes. Set the domes aside, pull out the DC dummy plug, and install your choice of decoders. It's all pretty easy. The locomotive is packed with a good instruction booklet plus a stack of mechanical drawings that show several exploded views and wiring diagrams.

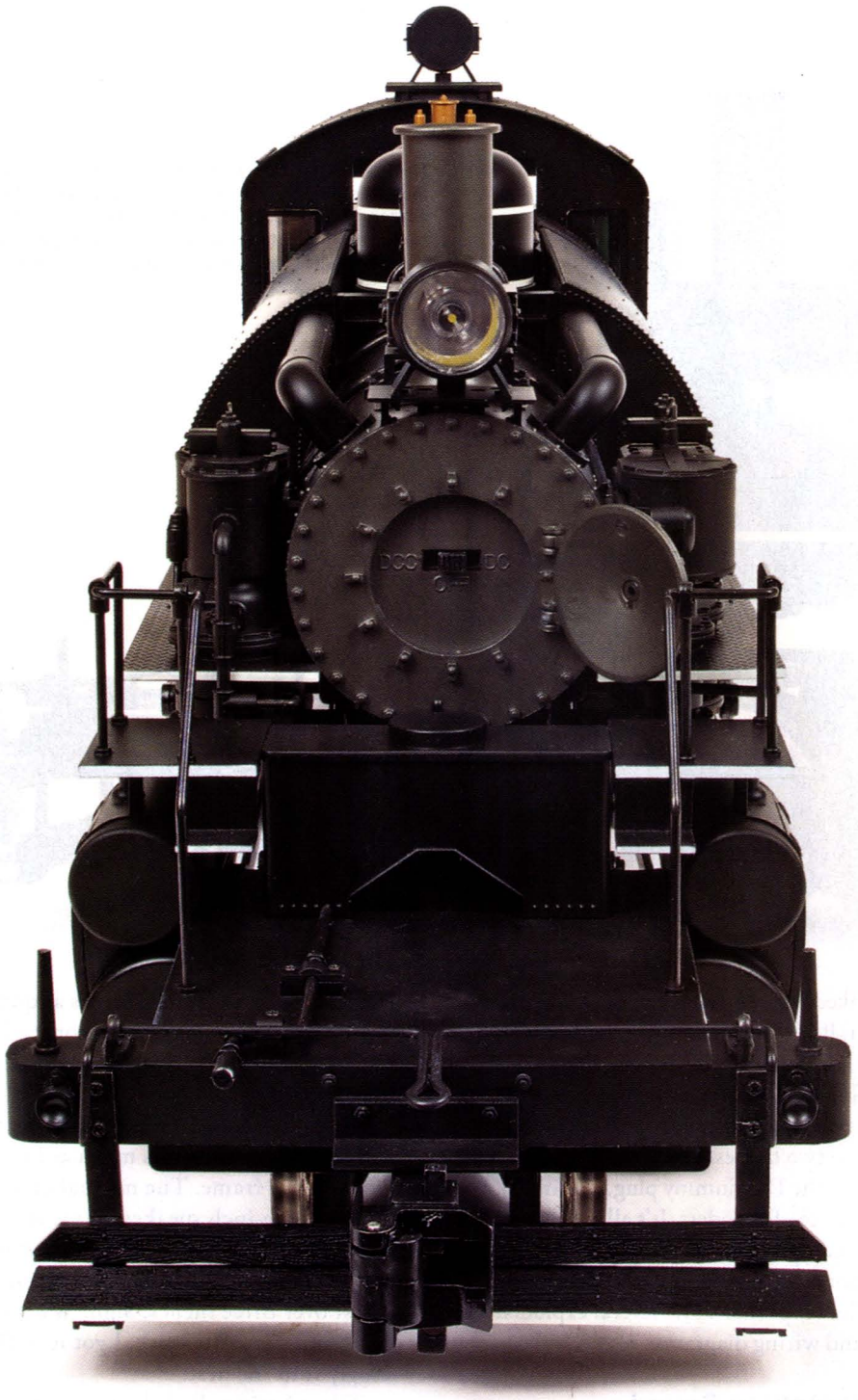
Installing Sound

To install a sound system by QSI Solutions would be both easy and complicated. The manual for the locomotive suggests a 3-inch speaker no thicker than 21 mm, which is just under an inch. What meets those dimensions? A cookie. If it gets thicker than that, you would need to raise the main board on it mounts, potentially complicating the installation of the decoder. QSI Solutions' standard three-inch speaker is 44 mm deep.

I was sent a speaker that is about an inch and three-sixteenths thick (29mm). It had a frame that came out as a square with mounting holes in each corner, but these wouldn't fit into the speaker nest. I took tin-snips and scissored around the speaker, first removing the corners and then nibbling off as much as I could of the metal frame. The manual says it takes a three-inch speaker, but it actually offers just a little less room. Meanwhile, the three-inch speaker's metal housing is just over three inches. Sigh! With nibbling and some file work, I got it to fit snugly into the nest.

When I reinstalled the boiler shell, it fit down around the raised board, but it was up to the point where the add-on decoder couldn't be installed or removed without taking off the boiler shell again. The raised capacitors of the decoder keep the dome assembly from sitting down completely, though it really isn't observable unless you look closely from a certain angle.

QSI has a one-board-fits-all solution that allows the desired sound package to be installed on any one of them. In fact, with their programmer, you can reprogram the sounds of your



This nose-on shot shows the firebox door open and the three-position switch for the smoker, offering DCC - OFF - DC. That front deck looks pretty empty right now, but I imagine adding coils of wire rope, a pair of rerailers and other assorted junk. This model just begs for more detailing and interesting weathering. The box on the front deck below the boiler is the front sandbox. The headlamps are white LEDs, progress over the yellow LEDs of prior efforts. The handrails with their stanchions and pipe joint connectors typify the quality in the detail.

board. This unitary design holds down the price. In this case, the Mallet not only wants recognition of Bachmann's non-standard chuff pin assignments, it also could stand to have the big caps on the underside of the board. Along the way, QSI Solutions sent me a 2-1/2 inch speaker that can handle 5 watts peak, and after I nipped the corner tabs off, it sat deeper in the nest, wasn't so tall in the first place, and so I wound up using half the spacer height on the board. This allowed everything to go back together again properly. It produces a great sound, so I'm very happy with it.

Up on test rollers, I gave the sound-equipped Mallet a first run, setting the decoder's address to the roadnumber, 121. While the Mallet has a chuff switch for each engine, there are no standards for this, and so the sound system doesn't read the chuff switches. Mostly, on a compound Mallet, all you'll hear out the stack is the front engine, since the rear engine exhausts into the front. The sound is more like that of an 80 to 100 ton Mikado, though you can program it to be a simple Mallet where you hear both engines separately. For me, it sounds great either way.

I discovered the headlights worked in reverse of how they should work. This can be fixed with some programming, so I used JMRI's Decoder Pro in Operations Mode on the mainline. First go to the "QSI Misc" pane and disable "Programming Verbal Acknowledgement," and this saves your sanity. Under "Light Control," I set the left set of headlight controls, top to bottom, for "Auto, dim, dim, bright, and bright." The right side was set for "Auto, bright, bright, dim, and dim." Now it all works just right!

On the Track

Back on the track, I found this Mallet could actually run on four foot diameter (r=2) curves — a snug fit — and the coupler system would work, front and back. A big girl like this looks somewhat ridiculous cranking around such tight curves, but it's possible. The Pine Belt features nothing tighter than ten foot diameter (r=5) curves, and she looks just fine there, even though that's the scale equivalent of 30 degree curves.

Each "engine" is similar to the truck on a diesel, in that it's free to pivot as the need requires, and it can flex up, down and side-to-side. The front and back axle in each engine have substantial side shift while the center axle will rotate around an axis that runs from front to back. This means the wheels are on the rails despite the irregularities of the track, giving better traction. It ran as slow as about three scale miles per hour and the top speed was just under 40. February was on the land when I made test runs, and my track was pretty wobbly, but the Mallet took it all with good humor and full speed ahead or back.

This model Mallet is like its larger brethren in that they are happy with the cab in front or in back. It has very flexible side-to-side swing on the couplers so it can pull with either end. Converting to Kadees is possible, but

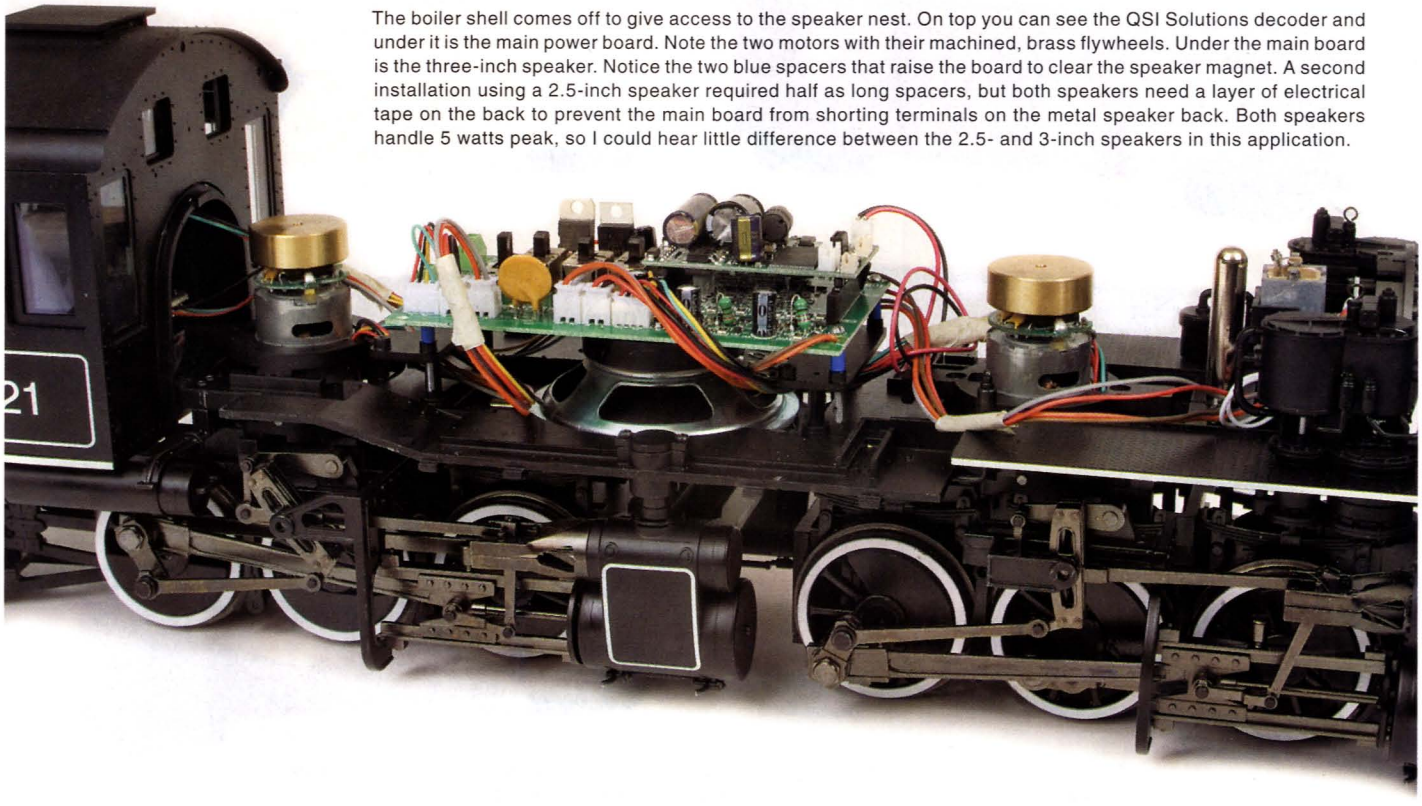
only the front is really set up for it. Unlike the prototypes, electric trains don't have the range limits that tank engines often suffered due to their small fuel and water load. Also, as their stores were depleted, they lost some of their tractive effort. That won't happen with your Bachmann Mallet.

Take it Home to Your Garden

That's my advice. If you don't have the new Bachmann 1:20.3 Fn3 freight cars to pull with your new Mallet, then hook 'em up to a string of the Big Hauler line and others that are about 1:24 scale. Your Mallet goes to a scale 45-feet 7-1/2-inches long, 13-feet 9-inches to the top of the stack, and an extreme width of 10-feet 6-inches on a gauge of 3-foot 6-inches, using drivers about 44 inches in diameter. So really, that's not too large in 1:24, making it a big Mallet instead of a little one.

When you remove the dome cap, underneath is the main powerboard with its four config switches: "Box/Cab LED," "Pickup," "Polarity," and "Motor." To the right in this picture and the front of the loco is the Aristo-style plug, installed backwards so the J1 plug is to the rear. Next to the domes on the backdrop are the QSI Solutions decoder on the left and the Bachmann dummy plug.

This is a wonderful model with loads of features and a dandy bag of accessories, plus excellent documentation. It's a good runner, tracks well, and plays well with others. With superb detailing, paint, and decoration, you'll be proud to show it off. It can be conveniently adapted to DCC sound, RC-battery, and other operational technologies. The QSI Solutions Aristo decoder isn't a hard application with a 2.5-inch speaker. It sounds great and gives you great control of the locomotive. If you follow the lubrication advice in the directions, you should have a long-lasting locomotive to enjoy for years to come.



The boiler shell comes off to give access to the speaker nest. On top you can see the QSI Solutions decoder and under it is the main power board. Note the two motors with their machined, brass flywheels. Under the main board is the three-inch speaker. Notice the two blue spacers that raise the board to clear the speaker magnet. A second installation using a 2.5-inch speaker required half as long spacers, but both speakers need a layer of electrical tape on the back to prevent the main board from shorting terminals on the metal speaker back. Both speakers handle 5 watts peak, so I could hear little difference between the 2.5- and 3-inch speakers in this application.

REVIEW N

Athearn's PS-1 Double Door Boxcars

N-scale cars with a new twist: McHenry Couplers!

Review and Photos by Phil Scandura

50-Foot PS-1 Double Door Boxcars, MSRP: $18.98

Athearn Trains
1550 Glenn Curtiss St.
Carson, CA 90746
310-763-7140 • Fax: 310-763-7449
www.athearn.com

IT SEEMS like every time I open an issue of *Model Railroad News*, I read about another N-scale release from Athearn. In my youth Athearn was known for their quality HO products. Years later it is very exciting to witness their growth in N scale. Today we'll take a look at their recent release of the 50-foot 6 -inch PS-1 double-door boxcar, modeled after the Pullman Standard prototype.

Athearn offers the PS-1 double-door boxcar in the following roadnames with two roadnumbers each: Chesapeake & Ohio, Delaware & Hudson, Denver & Rio Grande Western, New Haven, Norfolk & Western, and Western Pacific. Features of these cars include an etched metal roof walk, scale profile brake wheel, screw-mounted trucks with McHenry knuckle spring couplers and plastic wheels, detailed under-frame, and NMRA-recommended weighting. Each car comes fully assembled, ready to operate, and is packaged in a new stackable jewel case.

The Prototype

During the glory days of rail travel, Pullman-Standard was the name travelers associated with passenger trains; nearly anyone who traveled by rail rode in a Pullman-Standard passenger car. Even today many of these cars still ride the rails of tourist railroads around the world. Perhaps less well known, but just as important, Pullman-Standard played a major role in the standardization and production of railroad freight cars. By 1947, Pullman Standard had introduced several standard designs, including the PS-1 boxcar, PS-2 covered hopper, PS-3 open top hopper, PS-4 flat car, and PS-5 gondola.

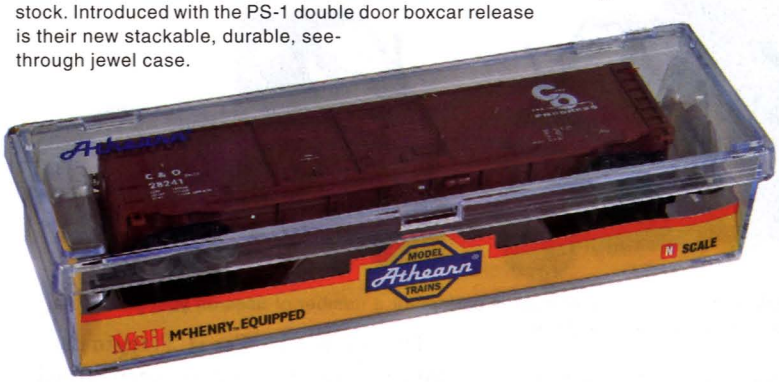
The original PS-1 boxcar was introduced in 1946 as a 40-foot car, based on a 1939 standardized, all-steel design from the American Railway Association. Over the years the PS-1 design would prove to be very successful for Pullman-Standard, being offered in 40-foot and 50-foot lengths during the 1940s and 1950s, later stretched to 60-foot and 86-foot during the 1960s. Considered a standard design, the PS-1 incorporated several standardized components including roofs, ends, brakes, couplers, and doors (both single and double).

The Model

Athearn previously released the single-door version of the PS-1 boxcar, and is now adding the double-door version to its product line. Based on the reference information I found, I was able to conclude that Athearn successfully captured the overall look and feel of the double door PS-1 in miniature.

The body detail work of the PS-1 boxcar is very good, most notably the etched metal roof walk and scale profile brake wheel. The printing is neatly applied and shows fine separation between colors. The under-frame of the car is all-metal to provide the car weight. It is detailed using cast-in components, as opposed to separately applied parts. The result is a

Available in six roadnames, Athearn has released the double door version of the 50-foot 6-inch PS-1 boxcar, modeled after the Pullman Standard prototype introduced in the 1950s.



Gone is the cardboard box used for previous Athearn N-scale rolling stock. Introduced with the PS-1 double door boxcar release is their new stackable, durable, see-through jewel case.

somewhat lower level of detail; however, most modelers don't spend much time looking underneath their cars.

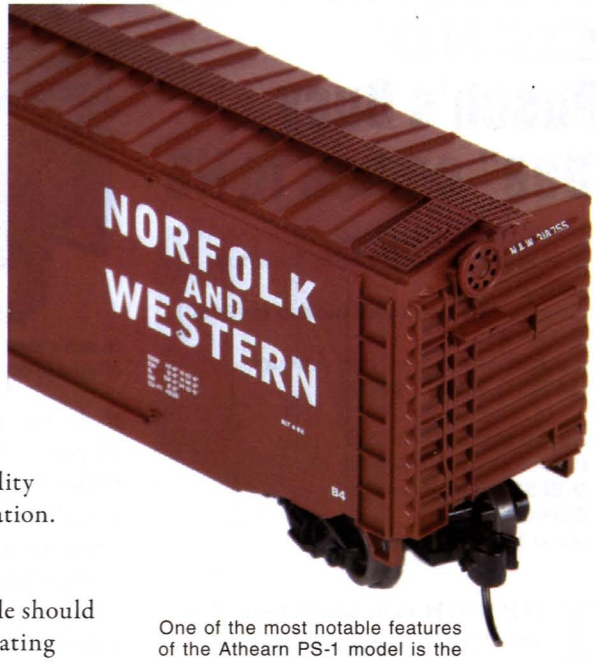
Based on the six sample cars reviewed by *MRN*, I noted a problem with the attachment of the roof walks. Several of the cars showed a bow in the roof walk where it had separated from the roof, possibly due to temperature variations. This effect is visible in the accompanying photos. A drop of super-glue could be used to repair the problem; however, I urge Athearn to investigate methods of preventing this problem on future releases.

Testing found the wheel sets on all cars to be correctly gauged, when measured with the NMRA Mark IV standards gauge. Thanks to low-profile wheels, these cars are able to negotiate both Code 80 and Code 55 track with ease. Athearn attaches the trucks to the bolsters using screws instead of friction-fit pins, eliminating the possibility of a pin falling out during operation.

McHenry in N

Those who model in HO scale should be familiar with McHenry operating knuckle couplers, introduced several years ago. Now for the first time these couplers are available in N scale, making their debut on the PS-1 double door boxcar. A check of coupler and trip pin height matched the Micro-Trains coupler height gauge perfectly. Testing was performed to determine compatibility between McHenry couplers and those offered by Micro-Trains, AccuMate, and Kato. In all cases no problems were noted during testing. Thanks to truck-mounted couplers, car operation was tested down to an 8.5-inch radius curve without any problems.

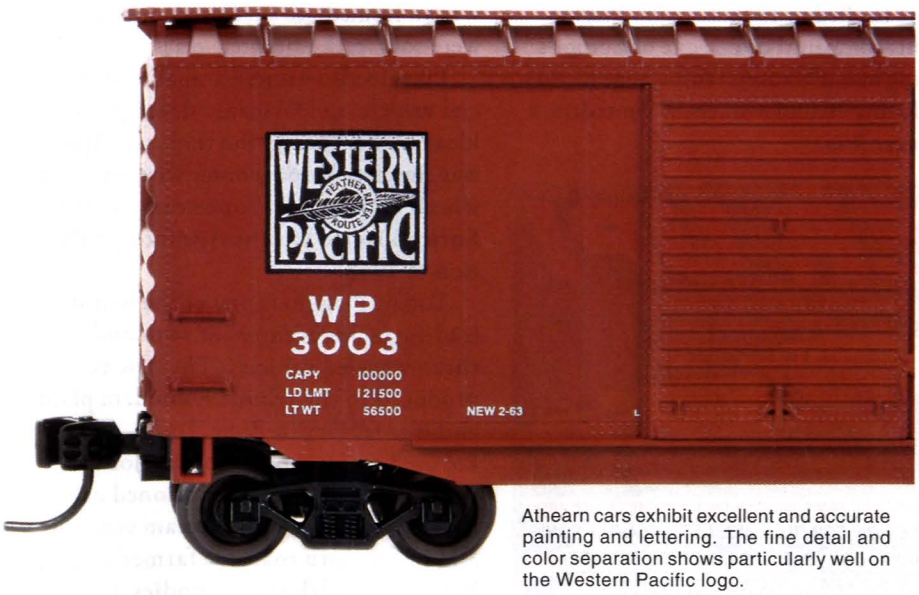
Athearn weights their cars in accordance with NMRA recommendations.



One of the most notable features of the Athearn PS-1 model is the etched metal roof walk. Their see-through, lacey quality enhances the realism of these cars, as does the scale profile brake wheel.

In the case of the PS-1 boxcar, this is accomplished using a metal under-frame. Per NMRA Recommended Practice "RP-20.1 Car Weight," N-scale rolling stock should be weighted at 1/2 oz plus 0.15 oz per inch of body length. Based on the NMRA recommendation, the PS-1 boxcars should weigh approximately 1.08 oz; their actual weight is 1 oz, close enough in my book.

Athearn does not include an exploded view or parts listing in the package; however, replacement parts can be ordered from their web site. I also couldn't find a stated warranty policy, but customer support advised, "...we warranty against factory defects provided we do not find signs of unusual wear or customer abuse."



Athearn cars exhibit excellent and accurate painting and lettering. The fine detail and color separation shows particularly well on the Western Pacific logo.

Closing Thoughts

This is an exciting time to be in N scale. Manufacturers such as Athearn continue to expand their line of N-scale rolling stock, providing quality models of well-known prototypes. And now the availability of the McHenry coupler in N scale provides modelers with an alternative knuckle coupler, one that is compatible with existing fleets. If your experience with Athearn dates back to the days of HO only, I encourage you to give their N-scale products a try. I'm sure you'll be pleased.

REVIEW HO

Busch's Busy "Bee" comes to HO

Busch's little Piaggio Ape 50 three-wheel truck is perfect for a number of uses on your HO layout. It is offered in both open and closed-bed versions.

Review and Photos by Bill Cawthon

Piaggio Ape open bed pickup (#48450), MSRP: $15.99
Piaggio Ape closed bed pickup (#48451), MSRP: $17.99

Busch GmbH & Co. KG
Heidelberger Straße 26
D-68519 Viernheim
Germany
www.busch-model.com

THOUGH more stable four-wheel vehicles have replaced them in recent times, little three-wheel delivery trucks were a common sight for many years. Made by companies like Cushman, they were used by maintenance workers, groundskeepers, security officers, and postal route carriers. Police departments often used a specialized version of the Cushman, called the Patrol Truckster, for parking enforcement or park patrols.

These vehicles were powered by small motor scooter engines with outputs generally less than ten horsepower, making them inexpensive to operate, and their small size made them very maneuverable and capable of going places a conventional truck wouldn't fit. They could carry a driver and a load of tools and supplies at a top speed of 25 to 30 miles per hour.

Common as they were, there was never a ready-to-run HO version of these little trucks until Busch introduced its Piaggio Ape 50 last year.

The name of the vehicle has nothing to do with gorillas: "Ape," pronounced "ah-peh," is Italian for "bee." Piaggio also makes the popular Vespa scooter and "vespa" means "wasp" in Italian, so the company is just keeping its nomenclature in the Order Hymenoptera. The "50" comes from the 49.8 cc engine. That's about three cubic inches of displacement. Surprisingly enough, that little engine will propel itself, the truck and a 440-pound payload. It's cheap to run, too: unloaded, the Ape 50 gets about 82 miles per gallon at a steady 15 miles per hour. Of course, you're not going anywhere in a hurry in an Ape 50; the top speed is 34 miles per hour. But how fast do you need to go to check parking violations or tend a golf course? And it's plenty for scooting around a factory, dock, or rail yard.

The company that is now the Piaggio Group S.p.A. was founded in 1884 by 20-year-old Rinaldo Piaggio as a manufacturer of ship fittings. He later branched out into locomotives and railway cars. By the time of the First World War, the company was also producing airplanes. Before he died in 1938, Rinaldo Piaggio saw his company become one of Europe's leading manufacturers with a huge factory employing 10,000 workers in Pontedera, a city near Pisa.

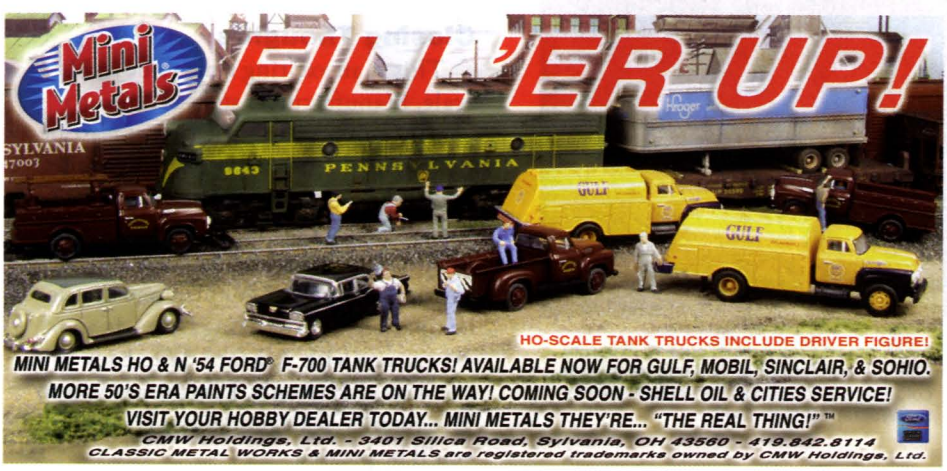
During World War II, Piaggio continued to produce aircraft until Allied bombers destroyed the Pontedera factory.

After the war, the defeated Axis nations were prohibited from building airplanes. Enrico Piaggio, Rinaldo's son, needed a new line of business. At the time, Italy, like just about every European country, was in need of mechanized transportation. The younger Piaggio decided to get into the motor vehicle business and gave the design job to Corradino D'Ascanio, an Italian aeronautical engineer who had worked for Piaggio until the war ended aircraft production. D'Ascanio's design brief was to develop a vehicle that could be operated by a man or a woman, carry a passenger and not get the driver's clothes dirty. In addition, limited supplies of expensive gasoline meant the new vehicle had to be very fuel-efficient.

D'Ascanio's design became the Vespa scooter that got its name from the sound of the engine, which Piaggio thought sounded like a wasp. The new Vespa was introduced at the 1946 Turin Show and was an immediate success. A million were sold in the first ten years.

Piaggio also wanted a small commercial vehicle, so D'Ascanio developed the idea for the Ape. At the time, the Ape was simply a Vespa scooter with two rear wheels and an open box to carry a load. Enrico Piaggio put the Ape into production in 1948.

Today, Piaggio is one of the world's leading manufacturers of two- and three-wheeled vehicles. The Ape is produced in the rebuilt Pontedera plant and in a factory in Pune, India. Apes are used for dozens of applications in addition to the ones I mentioned earlier, like pizza deliveries, ice cream vendors, and impromptu roadside farmer's markets. Fitted with special bodies, they are even used as taxis in India.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The cap on the optician's truck is designed to be removable. Busch models are generally easily disassembled for repainting or customizing. By the way, "damit" isn't a bad word; it's German for "so that" or "in order that." The phrase translates as "So that you can see the sheep.

Model Railroad News' crack tech team compares the tiny Ape 50 to the Smart Fortwo, the smallest regular production car sold in the U.S.

While several Piaggio lines, such as Aprilia, Moto Guzzi, Piaggio, and Vespa, are sold in North America, the Ape is not among them. However, since we lack an HO-scale model of one of the homegrown brands, I thought it would make a dandy stand-in and I ordered a couple.

The Busch "Bee"

Park the Busch replica of the Ape 50 next to almost any other HO-scale vehicle model and you will get an idea of how small the prototype really is. At 106.3 inches from the tip of the front fender to the rear bumper, the 1:1 Ape 50 is almost exactly the same length as a Smart ForTwo. The Ape is a hair under four feet wide and is five-feet one-inch tall.

Checking the model's dimensions compared to manufacturer's specifications, I discovered the height was less than a scale inch off and the width was about two scale inches under spec, but the length came up more than eight scale inches shy of the prototype. I checked some other dimensions and found six of those inches were due to the cargo bed being too short. As the wheelbase is within a scale inch of correct, that leaves the cab within a couple of scale inches of exact 1/87 scale.

Over the years, I have come to expect first-rate products from Busch and the Ape does not disappoint. The tooling is excellent with well-defined forms and sharply defined edges, even on delicate components like the rearview mirrors and windshield wiper. The finish is highly polished and the glass insert gleams. The pad printing, including the turn signals and rear lights, is well-defined and opaque.

A Busch first that has become a standard is the headlight treatment. They are transparent inserts with a chromed backing that add a realistic look to the front of the model.

While I didn't disassemble the models for this review, Busch replicas are generally assembled without glue so they can be taken apart for repainting, modifying, etc. The trick is to study the model to learn how it comes apart so that nothing gets damaged in the process. Just in case, Busch thoughtfully packs an extra set of rearview mirrors in the base of the cardstock package insert.

Let the Imagination Fly

Your imagination is the only limit when it comes to uses for these little trucks. I mentioned some possibilities earlier, but the list goes on and on. As to suitable eras, Cushman built their three-wheeled Trucksters from 1958 to 2002. Cushmans generally had a single, center-mounted headlight, a modification that should be easy to make from some styrene tube and one of the various lenses available for locomotives.

All in all, this is a nifty little model for any of a variety of scenes on your layout. Take a look at them next time you visit your favorite hobby retailer.

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REVIEW **HO**

Busch Smart ForTwo a perfect companion for Piaggio Ape

Review and Photos by Bill Cawthon

Smart ForTwo Coupe, CMD collection (#46105), MSRP: $23.99
Smart ForTwo Cabriolet, CMD collection (#46175), MSRP: $23.99

Busch GmbH & Co. KG
Heidelberger Straße 26
D-68519 Viernheim
Germany
www.busch-model.com

The tiny Smart City Car was unveiled in 1997 and went on the market in Europe a year later. The Smart went on sale in the U.S. in January 2008. Busch has made the factory-authorized replicas of every version of the Smart since the car was introduced. Shown here are the Smart ForTwo Cabriolet and ForTwo Coupe, the two models offered in America.

When the Smart was being developed, one of the plans was to have them available at major German railroad stations. Incoming passengers could rent one to take care of their business in the city and drop it off before catching the train home. In the real world, the deal fell through, but it might be a neat idea for a modern-era station on a layout as such ideas have been explored in the United States, including the use of a fleet of Smarts in Atlanta, Georgia

ONCE called the "Purple People Eater" in derision by former U.S. Senator Trent Lott and the butt of numerous jokes, The Smart ForTwo micro-car has had the last laugh, exceeding its projected sales target in a brutal year for the auto industry. In January, the Smart ForTwo celebrated its first anniversary in the U.S. market with sales of 24,622 Coupes and Cabriolets in the United States and another 3,749 in Canada, where it has been on sale for a couple of years. In December 2008, one of the worst sales months in a very bad year, the Smart outsold the Chevy Aveo, Saturn Astra, Hyundai Accent, Kia Rio, and every one of Toyota's Scion models. In just one year, America has become the third-largest market for the tiny car that was once a joint venture of Mercedes-Benz and Swiss watchmaker Swatch.

The brand has had a rocky history over the 15 years since the development project began and several times the future of the car was in doubt. But Daimler persevered and now over a million Smart cars of various types have been sold since the original City Coupe went on sale in 1998.

Since its introduction, Daimler officials have said the car would be sold in the U.S. but there has always been some excuse for delay. It wasn't until 2007 that Daimler announced the selection of Penske Automotive Group as the exclusive U.S. distributor. Sadly, by that time, we had missed out on some of the other Smart cars, like the Crossblade, Roadster, Roadster Coupe and ForFour, all of which were discontinued before the brand made the trip across the Atlantic.

You might be surprised to learn the Smart also has a railroad connection. One of the original concepts for the car was to be an arrangement between Daimler-Benz and Deutsche Bahn (DB), the German railroad. The Smart was to be the basic unit for a daily car rental system which would allow incoming rail passengers to pick up a Smart at a DB station, use it to conduct their business in town and drop it off at the station before embarking on their return rail trip. Unfortunately, the deal fell through, but the Smart remains the quintessential commuter car for the way most commuters really drive: one person per car, in traffic where speeds seldom exceed 50 miles per hour and are usually far less.

While the trend hasn't yet caught on over here, in Europe, the quirky little coupes and convertibles are frequently used for promotions and advertising and

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are often seen wrapped in bold graphics. They are popular for light delivery duties in congested urban areas where their maneuverability and ability to park in half a space is invaluable.

They are also used by government agencies. Police departments use them for jobs like neighborhood and parking patrol and code enforcement. One city uses them for street cleaning.

Busch has been the exclusive manufacturer of HO-scale plastic Smart promotional models since the very first City Coupe and has produced dozens of variations over the years. The models shown here are replicas of the upscale "Passion" trim level, but the miniature Smart is also available in the base "Pure" version equipped with steel wheels.

Since Busch has worked with Smart since the beginning, it's no surprise to find the models are within a half-inch of exact HO scale in all major dimensions.

The tooling is first-rate with lots of nice detail, especially on the interior, and the finishes are glitch-free. There isn't a whole lot of pad printing, but it's well defined and solid.

The ForTwos reviewed here are in Busch's upscale CMD trim with chrome metallic paint and extra detailing. For those who are willing to cut a little slack to save a little money, Busch also has the original Smart City Coupe available as No. 48900 with a suggested retail price of $13.99. The Cabriolet is No. 48970 and the price is $14.99. There are some differences in details and some colors that are no longer offered, but the general appearance is the same.

In a nation with more than a hundred million vehicles, 24,000 Smarts are still going to be few and far between. However, if you model an urban area, especially in the Northeast or Southern California, one or two would be right at home.

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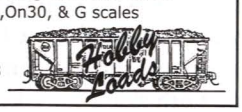

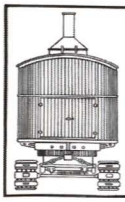

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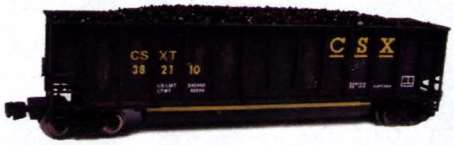
New Coal, Gravel, and Woodchip Loads from Motrak Models

Z, N & HO — Motrak Models has announced a new coal load, a new gravel load, and a new woodchip load for Z-, N-, and HO-scale freight cars.

Z Scale



A new coal load (#22002-1) has been released for AZL Bethgon gondolas. The loads are made out of resin with coal glued on top. A package of three retails for $5.95.

N Scale

A new gravel load (#16002-4) has been released for LBF/Huberts 52-foot 6-inch gondolas. These loads are made out of Hydrocal and come with the modeler's choice of color of ballast. The available colors are light, medium, or dark gray; white, aggregate, or color blend gravel. A package of three retails for $4.95.

HO Scale

A new woodchip load (#8706-17) has been released for Walthers 61-foot woodchip hoppers. The loads are made out of resin with real sawdust glued on top. Also released are new resin coal loads (#8706-5) for Walthers RD4 hoppers. This load is made out of pure resin. The woodchip load retails for $6.95 per two pack, and the coal loads retail for $5.95 for a package of two.

Motrak Models, 5239 Braddock Dr., Zephyrhills, FL 33541; 813-476-4784; E-mail: motrakmodels@verizon.net; www.stores.ebay.com/Motrak-Models

Norscot Releases new Truck, Trailer, and Machine Combos

HO — Norscot has issued four truck, trailer, and machine combos. All feature Peterbilt Model 389 trucks and Trail King lowboy trailers carrying Caterpillar machines — a Cat D5M track-type tractor, Cat 163H motor grader, Cat 950G Serries II wheel loader, and Cat 315C L hydraulic Excavator.

Each model measures 10-1/2 inches by 2 inches by 1-3/4 inches (26.7 by 5.1 by 4.4 centimeters). The suggested retail price is $9.95 each.

Norscot is offering four new 1:87-scale trucks for under $10.00. Each truck carries a piece of Caterpillar equipment.

Norscot Group, 1000 West Donges Bay Rd, Mequon, WI 53092; 800-653-3313; Fax: 800-653-4904; E-mail: norscot@norscot.com; www.norscot

REVIEW HO

Paper Co. Adds Dimension to Your Layout's Background

Southcoast uses large resin castings for first structure kit

Review and Photos by Dick Foster

BD 001 Samuel J. Rizzler Paper Co., HO Scale, MSRP: $68.95
Footprint: Approximately 2.0 inches x 14.0 inches x 7.0 inches

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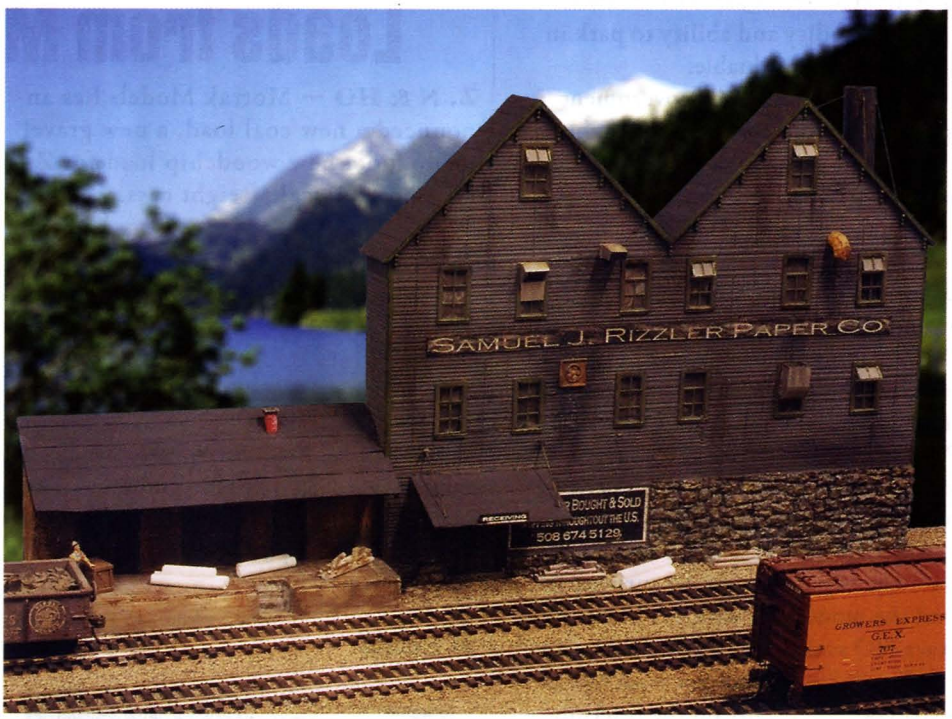

Samuel J. Rizzler Paper Co. makes for an eye-catching backdrop structure when finished. When placed against a wall, it's hard to tell you aren't looking at a full building.

RESIN CASTINGS have been used for many years for freight and passenger car bodies, but this is one of the few times I have seen a casting of this size and detail for a structure. Southcoast Scale Models is not new to this industry, yet many of its products are often missing from the shelves at the local hobby shop. They have been producing cast-resin detail parts such as exhaust fans, rooftop skylights, boats, and a variety of siding and roadway details for many years now. Samuel J. Rizzler Paper Co. is their first entry into HO-scale structures.

Southcoast's Samuel J. Rizzler Paper Co. is a backdrop-type structure that uses a one-piece hollow resin casting for the main structure with cast-in clapboard siding and stone foundation. The warehouse section is a one-piece casting with separate roof and concrete loading dock. The dock can be placed either to the right or the left of the main structure.

Windows, glazing, and a few detail parts fill out the kit. The roof of the wooden building appears to be a separate casting that was glued to the main structure. In any case, the roofing material is already cast in place, so you don't have to tar paper the main building roof. Detail in terms of the corbels and trim work is very good and would be hard to duplicate with individual pieces. In the case of all resin parts, as outlined in the instructions, they should be washed thoroughly before work begins. I used a liquid cleaner named "Simple Green" along with a lot of warm water. After the castings were air dried, I sprayed the main parts with a light gray primer from a spray can. Any gray primer spray paint should work to give subsequent paints a surface to which they can adhere.

Building Rizzlers Paper Co.

Overall, this is an interesting building and will add good detail to a number of layout configurations. My only reservations about the kit are the somewhat minimal instructions and drawings. I had to read the two-page instructions and attached drawings several times, since many steps seem to either be only touched-on lightly or in several cases not at all. I would think that a major rewrite of the instructions should be done and be given to all those who buy the kit. We'll try and highlight the problem areas in the instructions as we go along.

I should mention that I cleaned up what little flash was left on the castings before painting. I didn't have to sand the parts very much to release the flash pieces. The instructions indicated that you could lift individual boards on the wooden building casting to represent warped or twisted siding. I saw that technique in the pre-production pictures for the kit. Since the resin material is quite hard and brittle, I elected not to try after several attempts showed that a disaster could result if the hobby knife blade slipped and chewed up the siding. This technique certainly works for me when "aging" a wooden sided structure. Take your choice, but beware of potential trouble. In the next few steps I deviated from the instruction sheet only in the order of the steps.

I test-fitted the warehouse heavy casting to the left side of the wooden building. Just removing a small amount of stonework on the wooden structure and smoothing up the right end of the warehouse produced a tight fit. I then set the warehouse aside and started on the rockwork built into the wooden building. I first applied the final gray coat of paint to the wooden building's front and both sides. I masked off the stonework before painting. After this coat had dried, I then masked off the wood section from the stone. I tried something new for me in terms of painting the rock wall. I first sprayed on a coat of "stone texture" paint. This kind of paint can be found in many craft stores and there are

The detailed rock wall was textured with "stone" spray obtained from a local craft store, then it was highlighted using acrylic paint, followed by a wash of Indian ink and alcohol.

A Floquil enamel pen was used to fill in the window openings to disguise the gray resin of the main kit body.

several different shades to choose from. After allowing the texture paint to dry, I then followed the basic instructions using acrylic paints to highlight the rocks. A wash with India ink and alcohol finished rock surface.

Next, I did the weathering on the warehouse wall casting. Here again, I followed the weathering instructions and was quite satisfied with the result. In some respects you can't go wrong, but don't overdo the stippling technique. After the unit was dry, I drilled two No. 79 holes for the lamp brackets.

I then moved on to the concrete loading dock, which is part of the warehouse building. This was indicated as the last step in modeling the building, but I felt that it should be next in line since it was part of the warehouse and I had all the weathering paints and powders available. I followed the instructions as printed, and the loading dock came out quite well. It was set aside to thoroughly dry.

I then turned my attention to the window units. These are Tichy-made two-part windows and are very delicate, especially the upper swing-out parts. I first spray painted these parts with a medium green color I had in the paint supply drawer. This is also the color I applied to all the trim on the wooden building and around the doors on the warehouse. I painted the interior back wall of the window openings with a Floquil Black pen. This was a fast and easy way to be sure that the gray did not show through the windows after they were installed.

The actual assembly of the window units was probably the hardest part of the kit! You will see several windows have extra vent systems installed. These vents were not part of the kit, but served to cover up several broken and missing window frame pieces. The upper window part is very fragile and takes some work to get the acetate glazing in place, without overlapping the edge of the window frame. This problem also is a factor in the main window frame; if the glass is just a fraction too wide or long, the window will not fit properly in the opening flush with the siding. Perhaps having the acetate pre-scored to the correct width and height might help in the installation.

A small suction tool I have had for a number of years was used to hold the glazing as I positioned it on the window frames. The glazing was held in place with Faller Super Expert plastic cement. Installing some of the windows with

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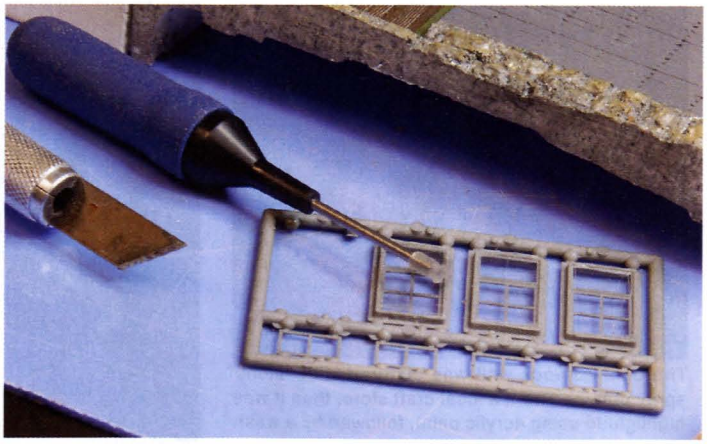
the upper section open was not much of a problem and a small drop of CA glue kept them in position.

I was now ready to glue the warehouse roof on to the warehouse casting. It was slightly warped at one end but it lay down on the main casting with only minor pressure from several clamps. After the roof dried I saw that part of the roof end, which butted up against the wooden structure, had to be cut away to produce a tight fit. I used a sharp hobby knife and sanding block to get the right fit. Then I used more "Maxi Cure" CA glue to attach the warehouse to the side of the wooden building.

While these parts were drying, I turned my attention to assembling and painting the lamps and brackets along with cutting out the main company name sign. I noticed that on the second smaller sign the spelling of "throughtout" is not correct — it should be "through out" I smeared a little texturing over the extra letter to minimize the problem. I also painted and assembled the billboard, which can be used in a number of places, either around the paper company or elsewhere on the layout. The large roof stack was fairly straightforward, although cutting the base at a 45 degree angle as indicated in the instructions wasn't quite correct. There was a possibility that I hadn't made the cut correctly so I used a sanding block to make the stack sit vertically, when glued to the roof. I drilled three holes around the circumference of the stack top and inserted the guy wires and then ran them down to the roof and secured the end with a tiny drop of CA glue.

Finally, I glued the concrete loading dock to the front of the warehouse, which gave quite a bit of extra stability to the structure. I then used dry brush techniques along with Bragdon powders to give the whole structure a final weathering coat. The weathering was then protected with a coat of DullCote spray, which also helped the windows to appear to be very dirty and hard to see through, as they probably were in the prototype building.



A small suction tool helped to place the glazing in the many window frames. This was the trickiest part of building the kit for me.

A Good Fit for a Small Niche

I would say that other than the problems with the instructions, the structure was fun to build and didn't take too much time. All the parts fit just as described and nothing was missing from the kit. It is a fine looking building and will fit into almost any model railroad environment.

The building could be changed to several other types of industries with just the installation of a new sign and additional details. I understand that

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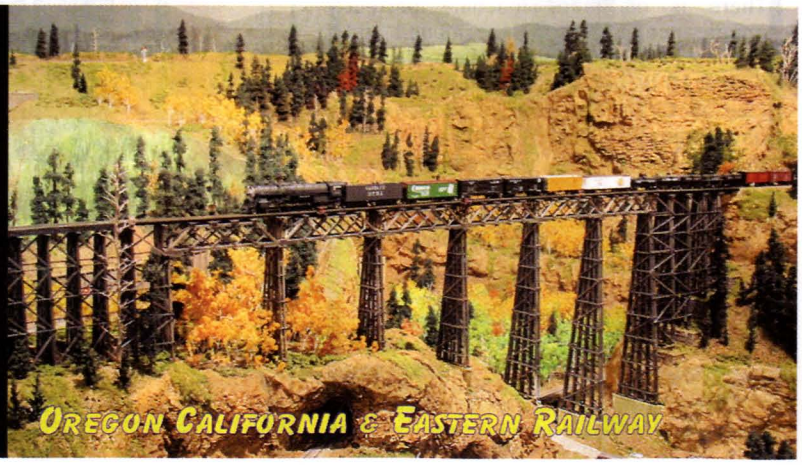

The roof on the warehouse was trimmed to make a tight fit against the wooden building.

Southcoast is now in the process of introducing their second resin kit, which is a pedestrian covered bridge for over the track usage. Southcoast Scale Models should be please with Mr. Rizzler's Paper Company, which nicely fills a niche in the lineup of background building for an industrial area or anywhere that space is at a premium.

Limited Run American Flag Company from BTS

O — BTS has announced the limited run of the American Flag Company. The building is of trapezoid shape, with an exterior staircase, loading dock, rooftop billboard, and water tank. It has positionable windows and doors, and many brass and pewter detail castings. Figures, signs, interior floors and walls, and grade crossing components are all included as well as a removable roof. The footprint measures approximately 73 by 40 inches (at the wide end). The American Flag Company (#18108) retails for $299.95.

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Review and Photos by Denis Dunning

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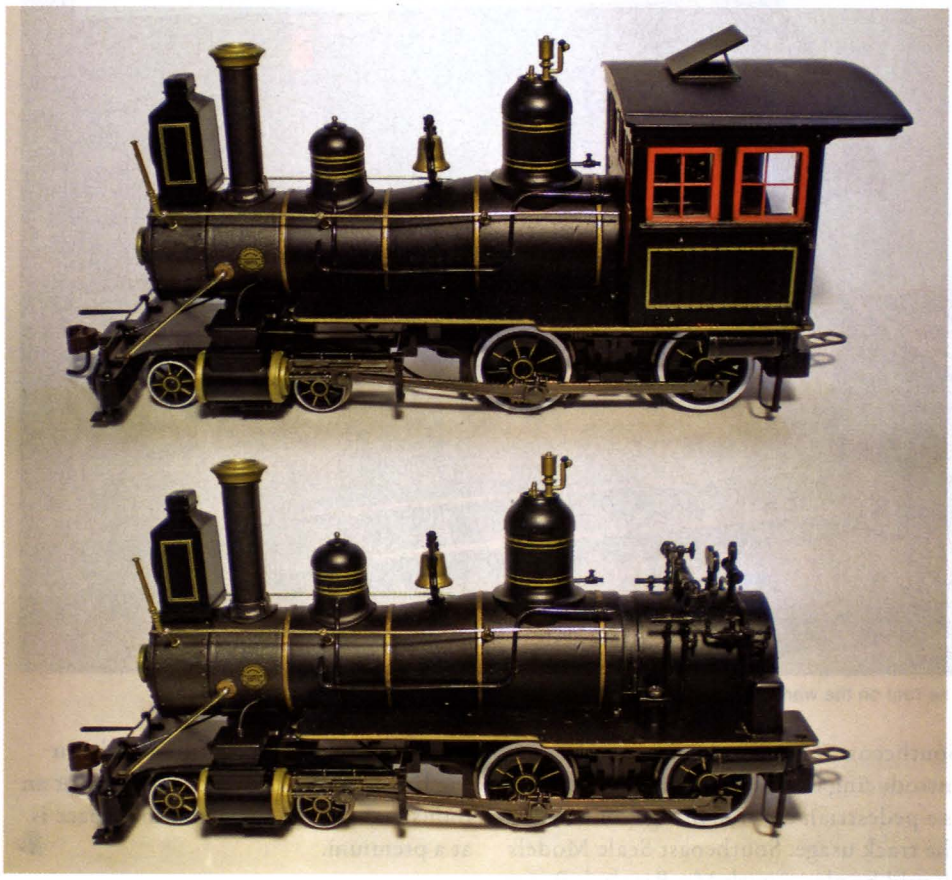

Before and after views of the Bachmann locomotive with cab removed. Although some minor surgery is required in order for the new body to fit properly, the results are well worth the effort.

BANTA MODELWORKS has been making a number of wood conversion kits for various changes to Bachmann's On30 models. Their latest is this Inspection Cab kit that fits the Bachmann Inside Frame 4-4-0 American steam locomotive. Note that the later version of the 4-4-0 with outside frames has a much longer boiler and is not suitable for this kit.

An inspection locomotive was a special type of steam locomotive designed to carry railroad officials on inspection tours of the railroad property. They were fitted with passenger car-like bodywork and seating. Many railroads in the nineteenth century owned one, but their use dwindled in the twentieth century. They were replaced with converted passenger-car inspection cars, or hi-rail trucks, automobiles fitted with flanged steel wheels.

Some inspection locomotives were especially built for this service, while others were rebuilt from obsolete locomotives. Many were quite small, but a few were built on larger locomotive frames, probably from decommissioned engines. They were generally well cared for and highly decorated. Some railroads had steam cars of this same general type in service as late as the 1930s.

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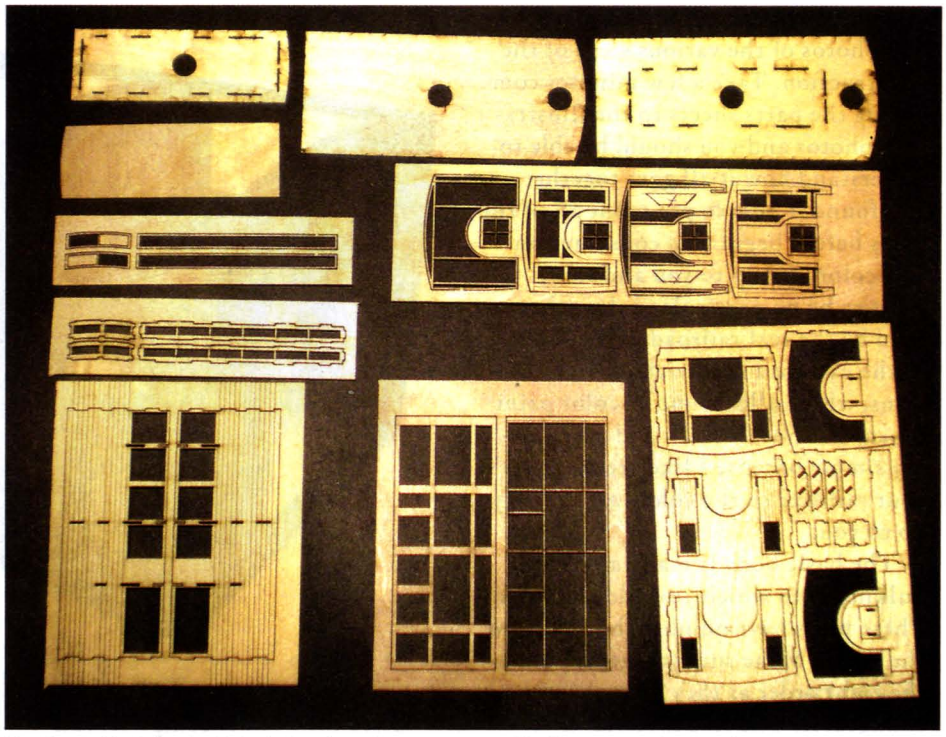
The Russian Railways still has two inspection locomotives A Chs2 549 & 552. These vehicles are converted electric locomotives, which are used to carry officials on inspection tours. The only known surviving U.S. example is the Reading Railroad's Black Diamond, a tiny 2-2-2 with fully enclosed bodywork, at the Museum of Transportation in St. Louis, Missouri.



The Banta Modelworks kit includes these laser-cut parts. You'll want to paint the pieces prior to assembly. I chose a green and black livery, but the colors you use are up to you.

Building the Inspection Cab

This kit is composed almost entirely of high-quality, laser-cut wood sheets. Some of the sheets, primarily the trim pieces, have an adhesive backing. All of the laser-cutting is extremely well done, and obviously Banta Modelworks has put a lot of time in developing the various parts. The only other material is clear acetate that has been laser cut to fit the various window openings.

Before beginning assembly of the cab I would suggest you make the modifications to the Bachmann 4-4-0. The cab must be removed. This is held in place with four screws under the walkway. You will need to cut the threads that go to the bell and the whistle.

Next, cut the wire that makes up the handholds on both sides of the boiler. Leave a short section of the handhold at the front of the boiler to a length that meets the front of the new cab. The two boiler supports that go to the pilot beam should be removed as they will not allow the new cab to fit properly.

The instruction sheet is very well done (except for a number of typos) which I seem to be finding in most

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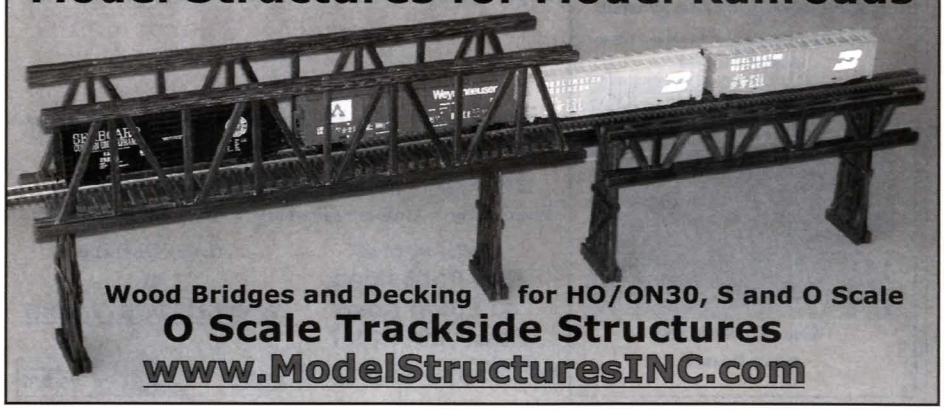

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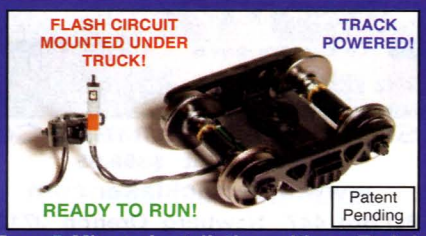

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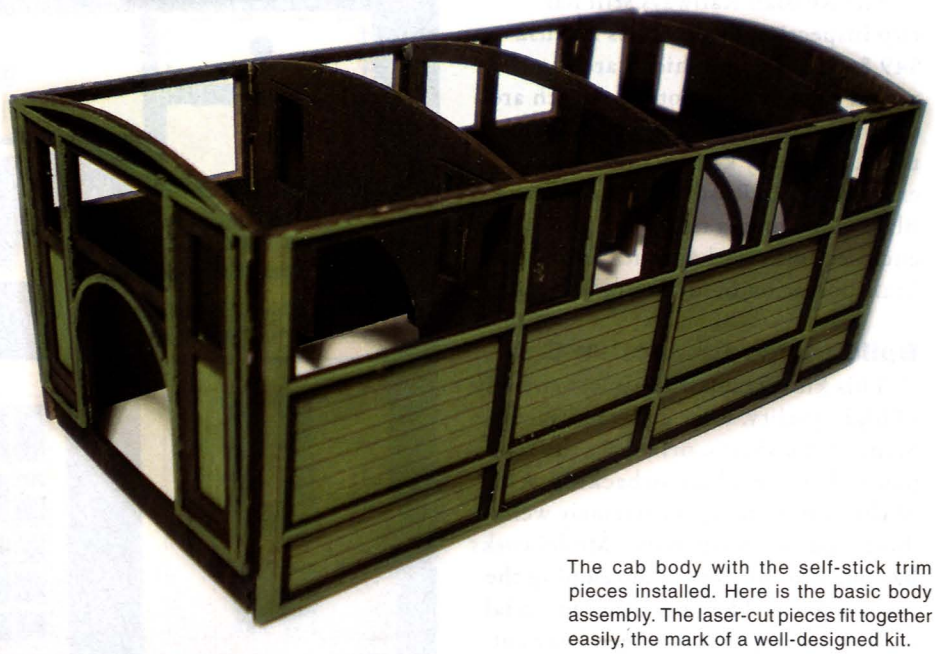
instruction sheets, with text, drawings, and photos of the various steps of the construction. Take a few minutes comparing the parts sheets to the illustration photos and you should be able to understand how it all goes together.

I found it best to pre-paint all of the parts before beginning construction. The colors are up to you and there seem to be no particular color schemes used by the real railroads. The sides of the cab are a sandwich of three sections, which allow a multi-color paint scheme. I chose a black and green livery simply because I like green, but it's your railroad so the colors are entirely up to you.

The basic body is made up of five bulkheads to which you add the sides. These parts have numbers burned into the wood. Make sure you get them in the right order as they are not interchangeable. The side material is very thin which allows for the curved sides of the body. These are tab and slot pieces, to make the assembly easy. I glued all the bulkheads to one side and let the glue set well before adding the other side. Make sure to keep the assembly square.



The cab body with the self-stick trim pieces installed. Here is the basic body assembly. The laser-cut pieces fit together easily, the mark of a well-designed kit.

Once the body is complete, it is time to add the two layers of trim assembly. The end trim goes on first as the sides cover up the corner joints. When attaching the trim pieces, lightly tack them in place with your fingers and be sure they are in the correct position, as the adhesive on these parts sticks extremely tightly. They are very delicate so trying to remove and replace the trim will probably result in broken pieces.

To add the new cab to the locomotive, simply glue it onto the locomotive body. I used a drop of ACC to each corner. This gives a good attachment,

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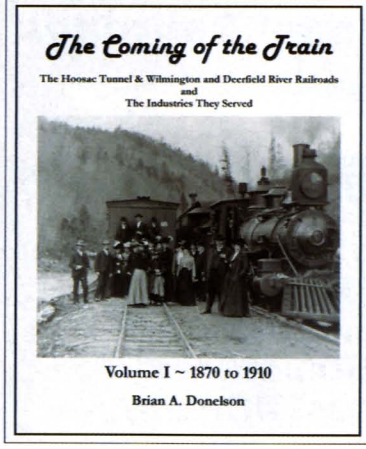
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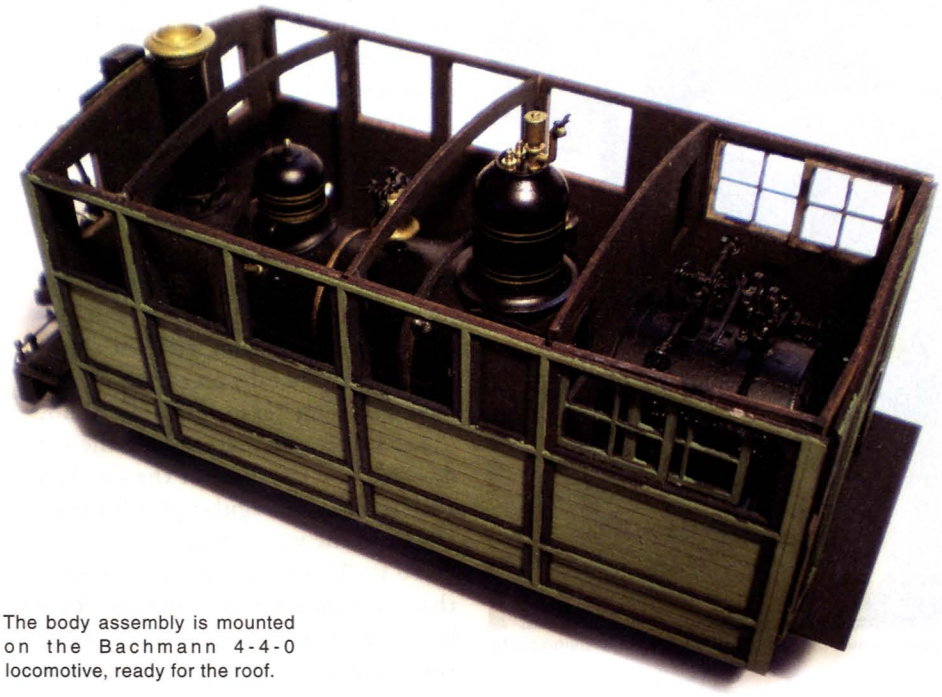

The body assembly is mounted on the Bachmann 4-4-0 locomotive, ready for the roof.

yet the body can always be removed should you encounter problems with the locomotive.

Be sure to add the cab windows and the window glazing before beginning with the roof. This is covered at the end of the instructions, which is a bit late at this point. The glazing is laser-cut to fit the size of the window and is held in place with the self-stick portion of the window trim. This makes the installation of the glazing a breeze. The cab windows are individual pieces and can be left in either an open or closed position.

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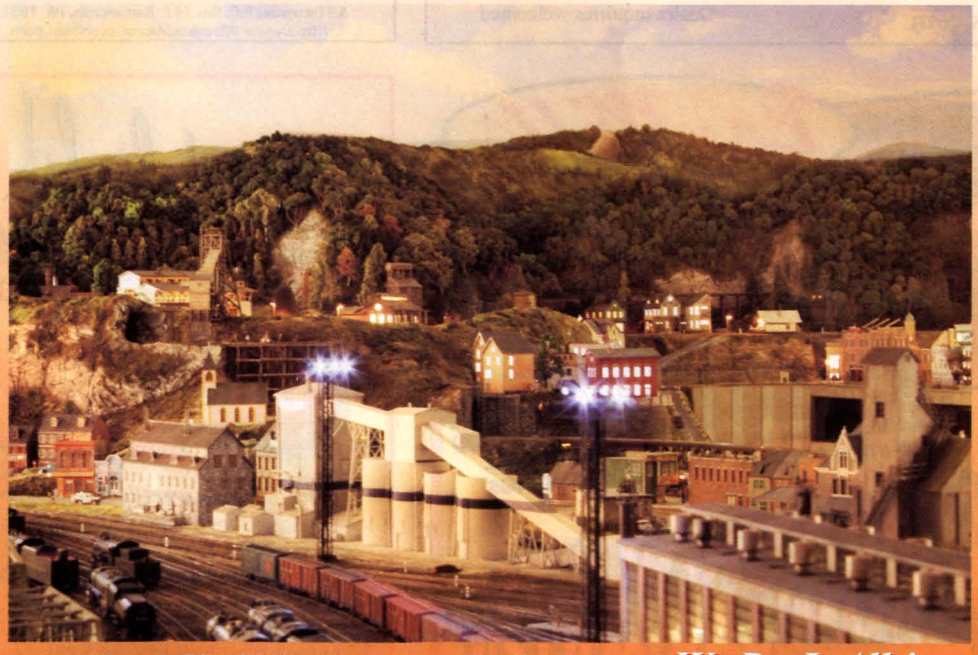

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The finished model on my On30 layout. The tender has been converted to a wood burning unit, using parts included with the Bachmann locomotive.

There are two versions of the roof supplied in the kit. You can model a simple curved roof, or a fancier curved version with a clerestory roof. I chose the simpler version since it fit my tastes. Both roof sections have holes in them to accept the smoke stack and the whistle and relief valve on the rear steam dome.

The clerestory roof is made of four sides and a two-piece roof. If you opt for the clerestory roof be sure to use the main roof section with the slots that accept the tabs on the clerestory roof. For some reason, Banta did not use the self-stick material for the window trim on this part of the kit. You will have to use regular glue for the trim and the window glazing.

To finish the cab, there are steps that go from the front doors to the pilot beam. These are built up from two side members, two steps, and a bottom

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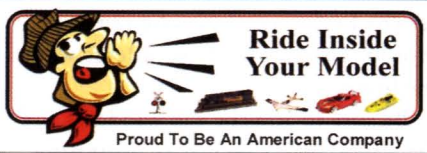

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plate. The steps fit into slots on the front of the cab and the other end rests on the pilot deck.

Closing Thoughts

Once the Inspection Cab is finished, there are still some decisions to make. With the 4-4-0 American locomotive, Bachmann provides a choice in the look of the tender. As packed in the box, the tender has a coal load, but there is also a fuel oil bunker and a woodpile with railings.

With the old-time look of the Inspection Cab I chose to convert the tender to the wood load. The various loads simply slide in and out of slots on the tender so it is very easy to make the conversion. The load is actually three pieces: the top of the load, an end piece of the tender, and a section with either spilled coal or a few pieces of wood: a very nice touch from Bachmann.

The removable fuel load also allows access to the DCC decoder in the tender. There are two sets of wires that go from the tender to the locomotive for electrical pickup and wiring for the motor and lights.

This Banta kit provides a very nice look to the Bachmann American. As there is not a lot of variety in On30 locomotives, this will give you a new piece of motive power that is sure to bring interest to any layout and will certainly be a conversation piece.

More License Plates from Howard's Hobby

HO — Howard's Hobby has released easy to apply, cut, and glue license plates for the following states in a specific year; Pennsylvania (1958 only), Illinois (1954 only), and Indiana (1954 only). Also available are license plates for Wisconsin (1950 to present), Wyoming (1950 to present), Montana (1960 to present), British Columbia Canada (1950 to present), Yukon Territory Canada (1960 to present), and England, Scotland, Wales (1904 to present). Each package includes enough plates to do at least twenty vehicles. The retail price is $1.50 per package and includes shipping.

Howard's Hobby, 116 Silver Hill Rd, Ansonia, CT 06401; 203-732-5346; www.howardshobby.com

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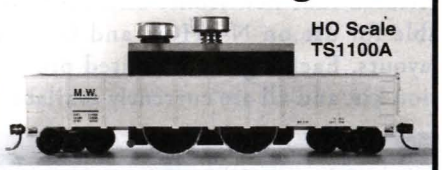

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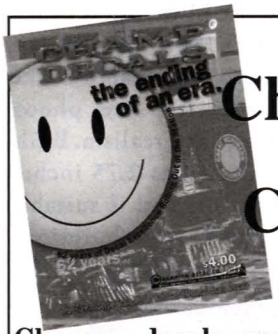

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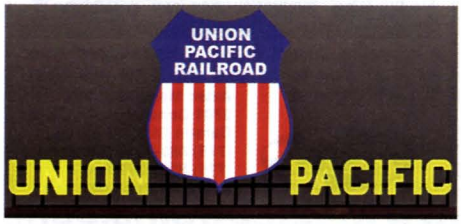
Iconic Billboards Add Class to City Scenes

N, HO & O — Miller Engineering has released four new iconic billboard suitable for use on N-, HO-, and O-scale layouts. Each sign is a limited production kit, and all are currently available.



The Union Pacific billboard is based on the UP sign in Salt Lake City. Designed to sit atop a city structure, the sign comes with stainless steel photo-etched supports for added realism. Built-up, the billboard measures 2.75 inches tall by 6.1 inches wide, and is suitable for use on HO- and O-scale buildings. The UP sign (#3781) retails for $49.95.

Union Station's historic Travel by Train sign (#3881) is available as a new sign for HO- and O-scale modelers. The sign measures 2.05 inches tall by 5.13 inches wide, and comes with stainless steel etched supports for $49.95. Denver's historic Union Station train station first opened in 1881 and the iconic UNION STATION Travel by Train sign was added in 1952.

The famous Reddy Kilowatt Alabama Power Co. sign is available in an N-scale version (#3682) measuring 2.45 inches tall by 2.62 inches wide for $29.95, as well as in an HO/O version (#3681) measuring 4.48 inches tall by 4.80 inches wide for $49.95. The HO/O version comes with photo-etched supports. Reddy is a stick figure whose body and limbs are made of "lightning-bolt" symbols and whose bulbous head has a light bulb for a nose and sockets for ears. The sign was created at the Alabama Power Co. by Ashton B. Collins Sr. and debuted March 11, 1926.

A classic Sunoco free-standing billboard (#3581) is available for HO- and O-scale measuring 8.375 inches tall by 4.5 inches wide. The sign comes with photo-etched stainless steel supports and is the third in Miller's Gas Station series. The Sunoco sign retails for $49.95.

Miller Engineering also produces a line of animated replicas of well-known companies' eye-catching advertisements. Visit their web site at www.microstru.com to see their current list of offerings.

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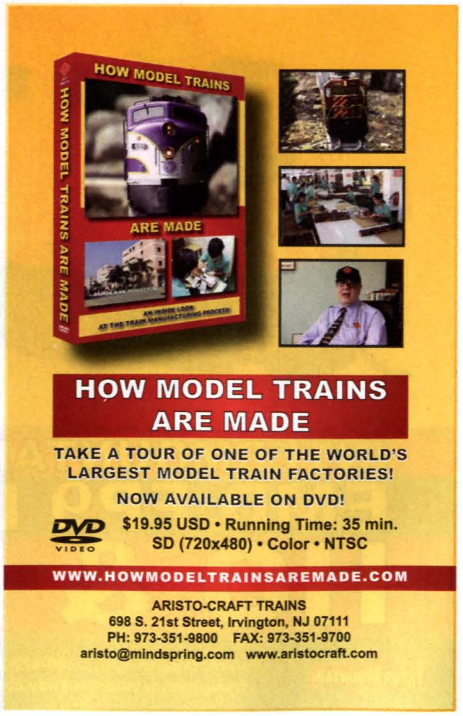
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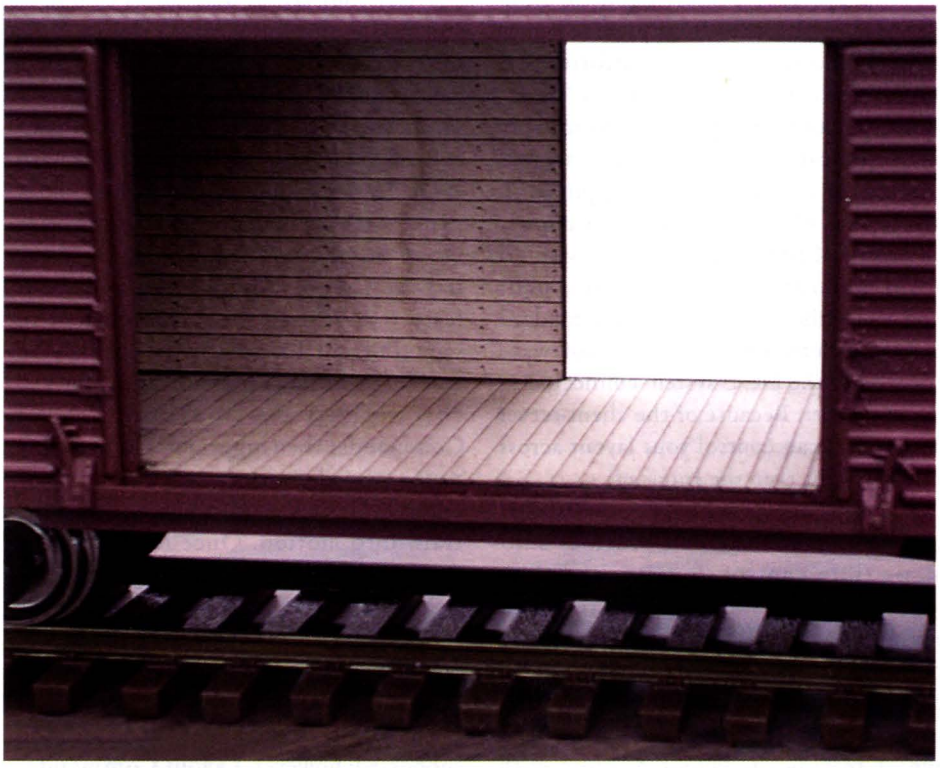

O — BTS has released a new laser-cut interior kit for the Weaver boxcar, and a USMMR freight decal.

The laser-cut wood interior kit features a peel & stick floor and four walls that are to be glued in place. The interior kit (#12610) retails for $16.95.

Also available is the USMRR Freight Decal. The decal set is white and can letter two cars from the Civil War Era. The decal (#12715) retails for $5.95.

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2009 PROJECTS

NP "Holiday Lounge" HO and N sides in spring. We are retooling selected Milwaukee Road HO sides to fit Walthers *Hiawatha* cars. 1935 Milw *Hiawatha* coach sides in HO and N. Other PS, UP, GN sets planned. Two-DVD 2nd Ed. #412 "Indiana, Minnesota & Early Amtrak RR Memories: 1964-72", $28.75. Over 115 HO and N side sets, doors, vents and body kits for GN, NP, SP&S, CB&Q, BN, MILW, UP, PRR, NYC, SP, C&NW, IC, RI, B&O, C&O, C&EI, L&N, KCS, N&W, ERIE, ATSF, NKP, D&H, MP, CN, CP, VIA, Amtrak. Use with TSP, Rivarossi, Con-Cor, ECW, Bachmann, Kato, Walthers, our HO Body Kits, or in N ALM core kits or plastic dome car overlays. Send 2-oz. SSAE for catalog & bulletin. Through hobby shops or direct ($4.50 for shipping). www.brasscarsides.com

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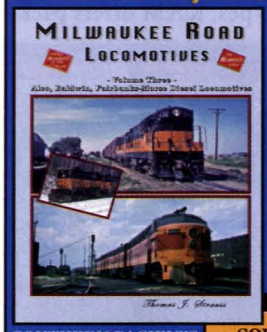

Coming Soon!

This is the third volume of a set which features Milwaukee Road Locomotives in-depth. There are many photographs, both black & white and color, featuring diesel locomotives built by Alco, Baldwin, Fairbanks-Morse. This book is written by a retired Milwaukee Road engineer who worked very closely with all of these locomotive types.

by Thomas F. Strauss

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A few Color Pictorials still available are: C&O Vols. 1 & 2, NYC Vols 1-4, PRR 1-5, IC Vols. 1 & 2, KCS, NH 1-3, NP 1, D&RGW 1, Pool Power West, SF in the Lone Star State, SP's San Joaquin Valley Line, SP's Overland Route, SP's Coast Line, Rock Island Vols, 2 & 3, Texas & New Orleans, Western Maryland 1, WP 1 & 2, Wisconsin Central 1 & 2.

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Project DCC - Integrating Operation and Automation
Part 9B, Computer Control Introduction & Familiarization, Part 2

— By Phil Scandura

This month, we continue our computer discussion from where we left off last time. We are taking several different software packages and using them with selected DCC systems, all from my Dell laptop. With so many software packages and DCC systems, a bit of confusion crept into Part 9A last month. It seems the photo captions were inadvertently swapped between the STP CANKey interface device (shown on the bottom of page 75) and the LocoBuffer-USB interface device (shown on the top of page 76). Also the contact information for STP was omitted, but can be found at the end of this month's installment. My apologies to STP and RR-CirKits.

Having discussed the fundamentals of computer control and **JMRI** last month, we continue this month with the remaining software packages.

Layout Commander

Active in the DCC community since the formation of the NMRA working group and standardization committee in the early 1990s, **KAM Industries** offers an extensive suite of DCC software. Generally falling into three types, KAM offers packages that provide locomotive control using virtual throttles, those that provide layout control, and DCC support utilities. All KAM products are built using a "client-server" architecture model, in which software applications (clients) make service requests to another software application (the server), which then fulfills the request on behalf of the client. Included with all KAM products, the **Train Server** application acts as the server, providing a standard interface between the various software clients and the DCC system connected to the computer. Because of the client-server design, you can control your layout across a network (or even the Internet).

Chosen for use with Project DCC is Layout Commander that provides automatic train control, routing, and timetable operation. Shown in **Figure 2** is an example layout diagram, drawn in the typical plan style (if you prefer the CTC panel look and feel instead, check the web site for their Classic Panel software package). Creating the layout diagram with Layout Commander is very easy, although, a few quirks require a work-around. We'll talk about these more next month.

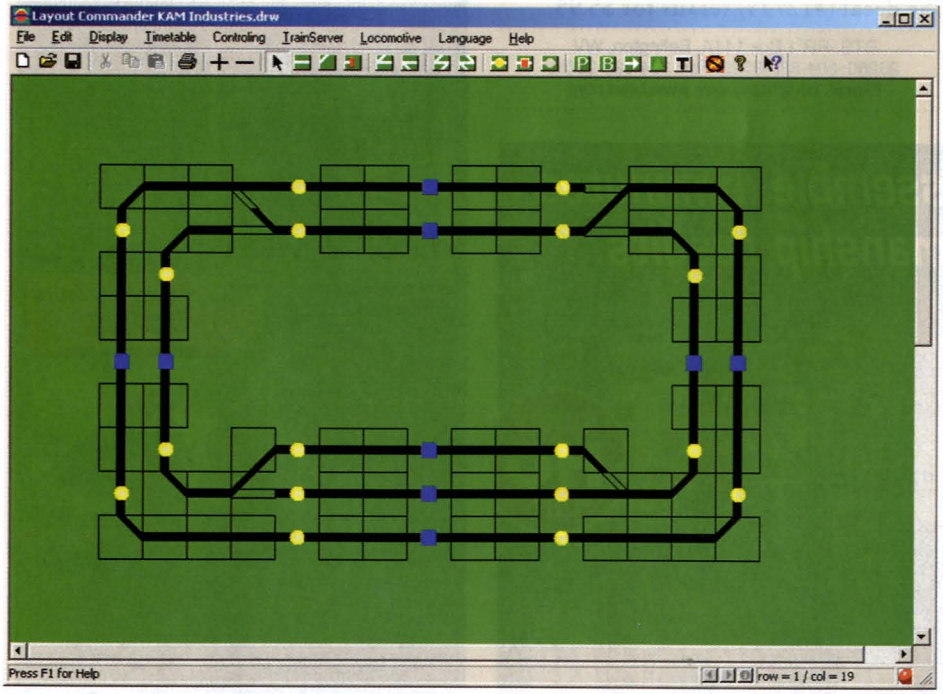
Layout Commander KAM Industries.drw
File Edit Display Timetable Controling TrainServer Locomotive Language Help
Press F1 for Help
row = 1 / col = 19

Figure 2 - Layout Commander from KAM Industries provides automatic train control, routing, and timetable operation. Seen here is an example layout diagram, currently in edit mode where cells represents a track element. Straight tracks and curve tracks are passive (more for show than anything), while turnouts, yellow dots, and blue squares are active elements. Clicking on the turnout controls the position, each yellow dot represents an occupancy detector (called a sensor), and the blue squares represent track blocks between them (also called hold points). For each active element you must define the DCC device address connected to it.

After your layout diagram is complete, you define the locomotives that will be operated on the layout, assigning names, icons, and DCC addresses to each. At this point you put Layout Commander into control mode, so it can communicate with Train Server to control the layout. First "place" each locomotive on its respective block on the layout graphic, then use Layout Commander's "drag and drop" feature to instruct the software where to send the train. Essentially you click on the current position of the train and drag it to the desired destination. Layout Commander then highlights the available route (based on occupancy detection), aligns the necessary turnouts, and puts the train into motion. Once it reaches the destination block, the train is stopped.

The KAM web site lists the currently supported DCC systems for all products. While many systems are supported, unfortunately **ZIMO** was not during Project DCC. **Digitrax** and Lenz systems are both supported; however, **Layout Commander** cannot control signals. Since Digitrax signals require computer support, using Layout Commander would enable train operation but all the signals would be dark. Signals on the **Lenz** system operate without the need for computer support, so it was decided to use Layout Commander with the Lenz system only.

KAM products support the latest Microsoft operating systems including Window 200x, Windows XP, Vista 32/64, and .NET servers. Although specific processor and memory requirements aren't stated, these newer operating systems tend to require heftier processors and memory. If you have a computer system already using one of these operating systems chances are likely it will have enough resources to support KAM products.

User support is provided via a traditional user's manual and several animated tutorials included on the distribution CD-ROM. There is also an online user community forum available via their web site. Although Layout Commander appears to include a Windows embedded help system, for some reason the help file did not get installed correctly resulting in an error any time I tried to access it. The printed manual and tutorials are fairly helpful,

although they leave out some important configuration instructions. We'll talk about these more in a later installment.

Train Controller

Train Controller from Railroad & Co. provides both manual and automated layout operation, thanks to their Visual Dispatcher mode. The example layout shown in **Figure 3** includes three trains under computer control, as well as a virtual throttle window for manual control. Train Controller displays the layout in the typical plan view, defining turnouts, blocks, and signals. As discussed previously, for each element you must define the connectivity to the layout, in terms of DCC addresses. Once this is accomplished, Train Controller provides a powerful and versatile logic editor to control the routes and signals, compatible with just about any DCC system.

Creating the layout diagram with Train Controller was intuitive and very easy. In fact, I went out on a limb and started drawing without even reading the tutorial. When I did go back and follow the tutorial more formally, I found that I had figured out many of the basic features already. For the more complex ones, however, I definitely needed the tutorial as well as some help from the user group.

Train Controller supports over two-dozen DCC systems, many with full functionality and some with limited functionality (refer to the web site for complete details). All three Project DCC systems are supported by Train Controller, although we chose to use it on Digitrax and ZIMO only.

According to the web site, Train Controller runs on all 32-Bit Microsoft operating systems beginning with Windows 98. It did not specify processor and memory requirements; however, I found my particular laptop configuration to be adequate.

User support is provided via an online user community forum available via their web site, as well as a traditional user's manual and a step-by-step tutorial on the distribution CD-ROM. Included are incrementally saved layout files for each step of the tutorial so that you can open them as you go and compare your results to the desired results. The user manual is divided into three parts: the quick start tutorial, basic features, and advanced features. Train Controller also includes a Windows embedded help system. In the past I've found that the embedded help system in many programs is simply a reprint of the manual, enhanced by a searchable index and hotlinks.

This isn't the case in Train Controller, however, as the manual notes that "...no document is complete without the other. If you want to know what a certain term means or what a certain function does, refer to the User's Guide, please. If you want to know how a certain object is to be edited or how a specific function is to be executed, call the help menu." In general I found this to be true, although there were cases when the help menu didn't quite answer my question either. For those instances I turned to the Train Controller online forum for help.

STP

Of the four software packages used for Project DCC, **STP** is unique in that it was specifically designed for use with ZIMO DCC systems and does not support any other brand. This is not surprising, given the ZIMO product family strategy discussed early on in our series during DCC system familiarization (Part 3). If you'll recall, the ZIMO product line is designed as a closed system, following a strict set of design standards not intended to be intermixable with other vendors. Consequently, STP is designed around the ZIMO family of products (especially the MX8 accessory module and MX9 track section module).

STP follows the dispatcher paradigm, although it doesn't have the look and feel of a CTC panel (see **Figure 4**). Operation is primarily automatic; manual operation is not supported (virtual throttles are not provided in STP). Once the layout has been drawn and connectivity to the various DCC addressed defined, the user can create various routes for STP to execute. Defined as a path between two stations, routes include the desired signal aspects to be displayed, turnout positions, and speed limits along the way. Rather than continually issuing commands to the layout while the train moves, instead STP configures the MX8 and MX9 modules using the settings for the defined route. Once the train enters the route it is then under complete control of the MX8 and MX9 modules without further assistance from STP.

Routes are restricted to single-train operation; STP supports the definition of "lines" between stations for multiple-train operation. Unlike routes, however, lines cannot include turnouts. When traversing lines, signal aspects and speed limits are controlled similar to routes.

As described in the user manual, STP runs on Windows 95, 98, ME, NT 4.x, 2000, and XP. A 32MHz Pentium class processor with at least 16 MB of memory and 5 MB of available hard disk space is

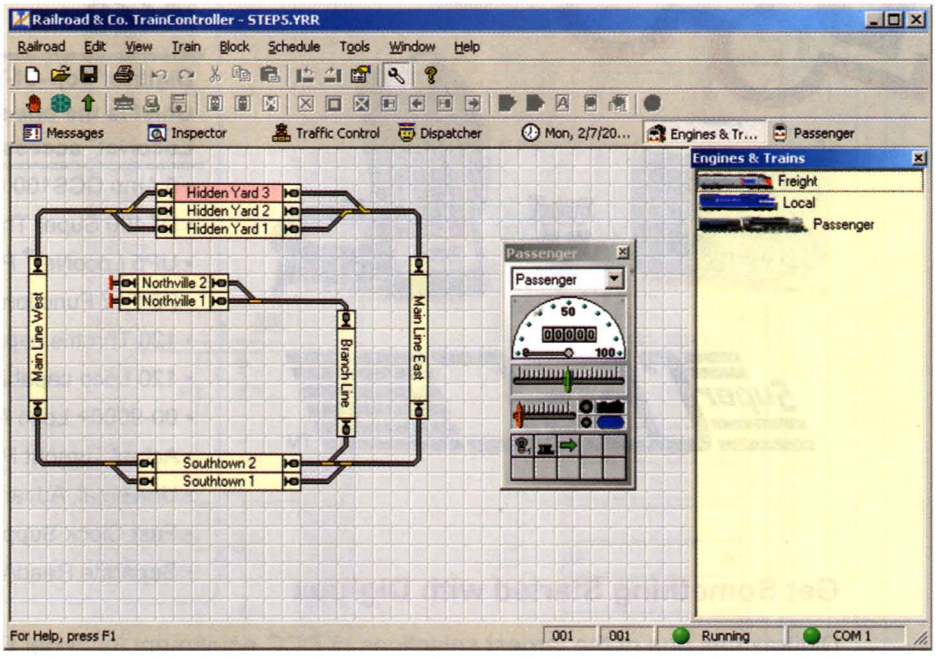

Figure 3 - Train Controller from Railroad & Co. provides both manual and automated layout operation, using their Visual Dispatcher mode. Seen here is an example layout diagram including three trains under computer control, and a virtual throttle window for manual control.

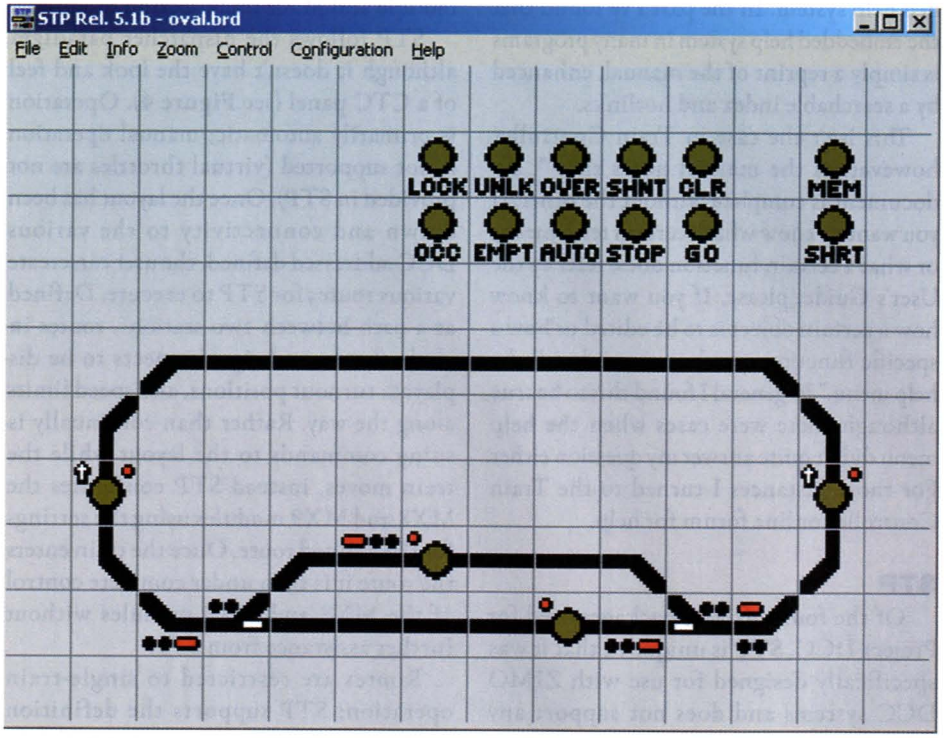

Figure 4 - STP, specifically designed for use with ZIMO DCC systems, follows the dispatcher paradigm controlling the movement of trains via route selection. Seen here is a simple sample layout from the tutorial that includes two stations (each between a pair of turnouts) and various "buttons" that provide route activation and automation control.

recommended. The computer must have a USB port to connect STP to the layout via the CANKey interface device.

User support is provided via a traditional user manual and tutorial. Both are provided in hard-copy printed form, as well as on the distribution CD-ROM. The tutorial is relatively easy to follow and introduces the user to all STP functionality except the control of signals. This was unfortunate as a significant part of Project DCC is signal operation. Reading the more detailed chapters of the tutorial, as well as help from the folks at STP, was necessary to get the signals working. While I found the overall user's manual to be quite comprehensive, it was often overly verbose and a bit "above my head." Having spent a good portion of my professional career authoring user's manuals, I have both an appreciation and sensitivity for the need to write manuals at a level that the typical user can understand, rather than writing for the expert user. In my opinion many portions of the STP manual are geared more towards the expert, leaving the beginners a bit confused.

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Parting Thoughts

Before closing I wanted to impart a few overall thoughts and impressions, having worked with all four software packages for several months. As you may have already guessed I was not particularly impressed with the user documentation provided by any of the packages. Some were better than others, there is no doubt, but none of them were up to my standards. I realize many of these companies are small (after all, this is the hobby industry) and may not have adequate resources to dedicate to producing a good manual. Still, no matter how good a software package may be, an inadequate user's manual makes for a frustrating experience.

Ease of use and an intuitive user interface can make the difference between a so-so software package and an excellent one. Two packages in this group were much easier to use than the other two.

Of course the key question on your mind should be, "Does it support my DCC system and the features I need?" While I cannot answer that for you, I can recommend that you review their web sites carefully, post questions to their forums, and/or send them directly to the "contact us" e-mail address. In some cases it may be possible to request an evaluation copy of the software, one that works for a limited time until you pay for the user license. This will give you the ability to "try before you buy."

Perhaps even more critical are the layout configuration assumptions that some software packages place upon the design of your layout. We'll cover this in more detail during the next two months, but suffice it to say I was fortunate (lucky?) that I wired my DCC devices in a manner that was fairly close to what the software expected. However, on one occasion I had to rewire a portion of the layout that worked fine manually using the three DCC systems, but didn't work well under control of the software.

Coming Next Month

This month we reviewed the ins and outs of computer automation, as well as taking a brief look at each of the software packages used on Project DCC. Over the next two months we'll look deeper into manual control and how each of the software packages provides that capability. See you then!

Mentioned in this Article:

Layout Commander software (Version 4.30.312); MSRP: $169.00

KAMIND Associates, Inc.
2373 NW 185th Ave., Suite 416 Hillsboro, OR 97124
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www.trainpriority.com

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Train Controller software (Version 5.8); MSRP: $349

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STP layout software (Version 5.1); MSRP: $455
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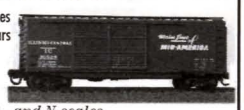

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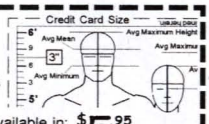

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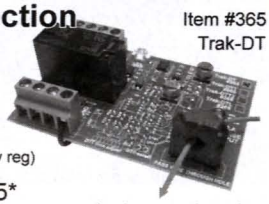

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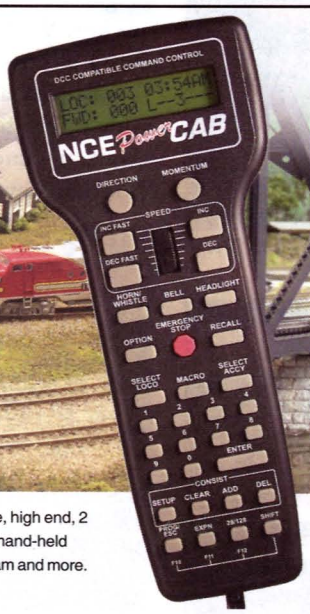
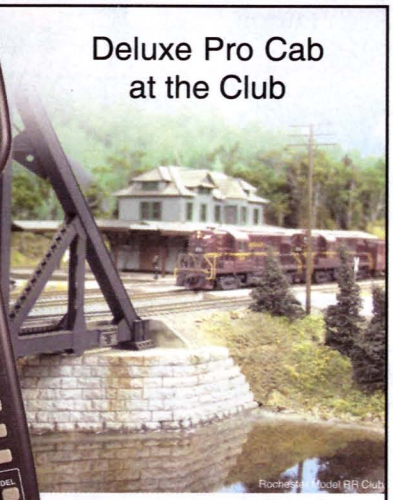


Deluxe Pro Cab at the Club



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Other Resources (Part 1)

CURVES
FOR AND ABOUT S-GAUGE MODEL RAILROADING
A column by Dick Karnes

A LOT of S standard-gauge people pay no attention to the non-S model press. This is a shame. Most of the content of the general model railroad press has relevance for modeling in any scale. Of course, you say, there are articles on scenery, benchwork, weathering, and wiring. But what about those pieces on building or detailing structures, rolling stock, and track? Well, many of them are relevant too.

There's nothing scale-specific about constructing or detailing trackage. S standard gauge has lots of trackage products, including track details like tie plates (**Tomalco**), turnout rail braces (**Details West**, **San Juan Car Co.**), and frogs and points with nut-bolt detail (**High Sierra**, **Precision Scale**, **Right-o-Way**). What's that, you say? Aren't some of those for HO or O? Not necessarily. All you need to do is mate the turnout component with the rail size you use. The Precision Scale and Right-o-Way components are for HO, but NMRA-standard flangeways are exactly the same width for S as they are for HO. And the O-scale High Sierra flangeways, intended for O fine scale, are also properly sized for S NMRA-standard trackwork. Those Details West "HO" rail braces and San Juan Shops "On3" turnout details will work just fine for your code 100 rail in S scale. By special arrangement, Tomalco actually repackages the San Juan Shops turnout details as S components.

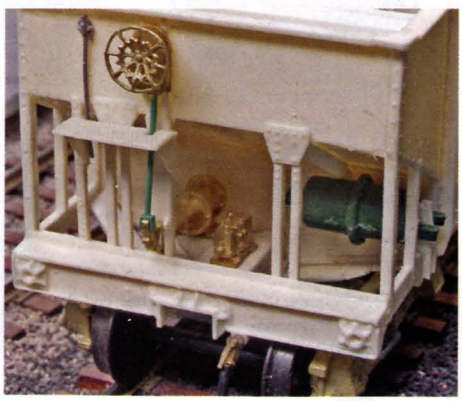
Details West RB-919 castings for adjustable rail braces really dress up a code 100 mainline turnout (near rail).

Details West RB-920 non-adjustable rail brace castings make up-front turnouts look really great. These are shown applied to code 83 rail.

High Sierra Models makes nickel-silver trackwork castings for O fine scale (1:48). These are great for S scale because the flangeways match the NMRA S-scale standard. Shown are frog and guardrail castings installed in an S-scale turnout.

Similarly, there are enough detail parts available for S modeling that you can apply most of the common non-S-specific articles to S-scale locomotives and cars. Of particular note are **BTS** for brass freight and passenger-car parts (e.g., AB brake sets and passenger underbody components), **River Raisin Models**, **Precision Scale**, and **The Supply Car** for brass loco details, and **Standard Railway Castings Co.** for resin components (roofs, ends, etc.) to make house car construction easy.

What we really learn from these magazines are techniques. Techniques are key. With the right techniques, anything is possible in any scale, and the techniques are transferable from any scale to any other scale. We'll be taking a look at some of them over the next few months. Stay tuned!



The S-scale brass brake system components being installed on this hopper car are from BTS. The plastic air reservoir is from an S Scale America detail parts sprue

Tomalco S-scale tie plates are a boon to track nuts like your author. They are shown here on the three right-hand ties. For comparison, the old standby, Grandt Line On3 tie plates, are to their left. Note in particular the difference in width between the On3 and S tie plates. All ties in the photo are nine scale inches wide.

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Feel free to e-mail any comments or questions about S scale in general to scurves@modelrailroadnews.com or snail-mail them to S-Curves, Model Railroad News, P.O. Box 1080, Merlin, OR 97532-1080. Suggestions, contributions, and announcements are all welcome.

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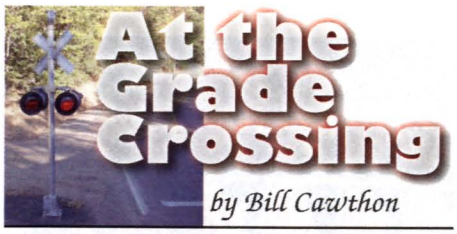


READER JOE BUX sent me a letter not long ago and I thought I would share some of it with you:

Bill,

As you may remember, I have written Model Railroad News *in the past concerning the lack of certain HO-scale figures and vehicles currently on the market.*

I have also wondered why, with all of the latest technology available, figures are not included in the driver's seat or as passengers in the new miniatures. I just don't think that a bunch of empty trucks or cars on a highway is very realistic. Well, to my knowledge, for the first time, Woodland Scenics has heard my pleas.

Woodland has come out with Tim Burr Logging, a truck of unknown heritage (to me), but with a driver and flat tires. A lumberjack is added to the scene, supposedly going back to look at the problem. The truck is weathered with mud, just like it came out of the woods. This, to me is an absolute winner...

...Athearn is doing a great job with their model As and Classic Metal Works has some neat 1930s vehicles. Drivers please!

Best,
Joe Bux
Bayside, New York

The best answer I can supply to Joe's question is that many collectors, who are still the largest buyers of HO-scale vehicles, do not want factory-applied drivers in their models. In fact, there are many times when even model railroaders need an unoccupied vehicle model. Since adding a figure at the factory level would require gluing or some mechanical attachment point, removing such a figure would require repairing the seat.

There's also the matter of cost. Even with all the latest technology to which Joe refers, scale model vehicles, like most model railroad products, are still decorated and assembled by hand. The cost of producing and adding a hand-painted figure to a model could easily tack another dollar or two onto the retail price.

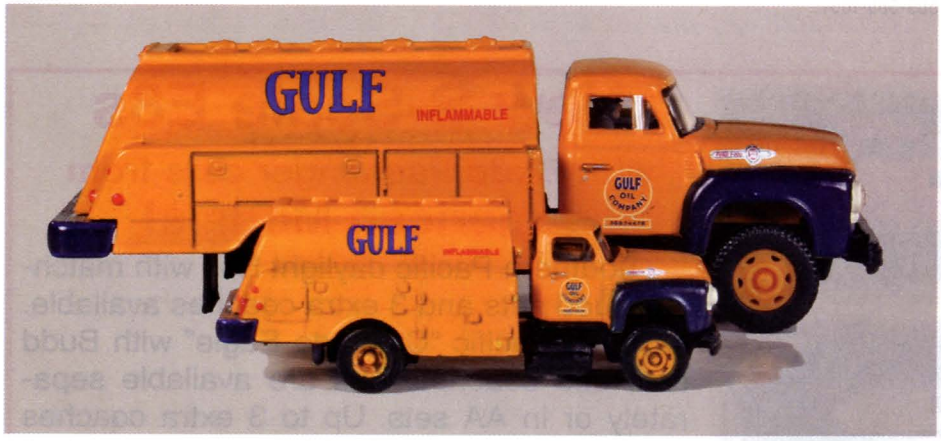
In the end, given the fact driver figures are readily available on the market, it is easier to simply allow those who do want drivers and passengers to add them as desired.

That being said, a number of modelmakers have added figures to their vehicles over the years. In fact, the Tim Burr Logging set isn't even the first for **Woodland Scenics**; several of their earlier releases dating back the introduction of their AutoScenes line included drivers and passengers. Decades before the first AutoScenes hit hobby shop shelves, **Wiking** began adding drivers to farm tractors and construction equipment. **Preiser** has combined its figures not only with its own vehicle models, but those of other manufacturers, as well. **Busch** recently produced a series of special models that include driver and passenger, and **Herpa** has added drivers to some of its special effects models.

Joe mentioned **Classic Metal Works** in his letter and, wouldn't you know? CMW's new 1954 Ford F-700 Tank Truck is at your local hobby shop now and it's the first HO Mini-Metal to include a driver figure (the N-scale version does not have a driver).

The CMW tanker is a good example of adding a new piece, in this case it's a very nice tank body, to components from previous models, such as the cab from the 1954 Ford F-350 and the chassis and wheels from the International R-190. The result is a welcome new model that will be suitable for layouts set from the mid-1950s to the early 1960s. In fact, such trucks were used in a variety of roles, such as a construction site water service, for years after they had been retired from daily use delivering gasoline, diesel, aviation fuels, or home heating oil.

The CMW model doesn't identify any specific prototype, but the tank body looks to be based on a typical Transition Era version with a capacity of somewhere between 1,500 to 2,000 gallons. According to friends in the oil business, these trucks normally would not be used to service fill-



Classic Metal Work's new Ford F-700 Tank Truck can be the basis of a new industry on your layout. Working from a small, rail-supplied distributorship, a small fleet of these trucks could span the towns and cities delivering fuels and home heating oil. Look carefully and you can see the driver figure in the larger, HO-scale model.

This angle gives you a nice view of the well-detailed tank body, complete with fire extinguisher.

ing stations as those have tanks that hold 8,000 to 10,000 gallons. These smaller trucks would be used to deliver fuels to fleet accounts like government agencies, fleet operators, and rental car lots.

The new tank body is good-looking with sharp molding and detail; there's even a fire extinguisher ready for emergencies. Without a specific prototype, it's hard to say if the measurements are accurate, but I am happy to report the tank body is within a couple scale inches of the correct 96-inch width for a commercial body of this era.

When I opened the package of our sample Gulf truck, I noticed the track of the front wheels was too wide, meaning when one wheel was properly within the wheel well, the one on the opposite side stuck out like a sore thumb. Trimming about a sixteenth of an inch off the axle will resolve that problem. Actually, I should say, "will resolve that symptom," because the real problem is the cab. In order to understand why it's the problem, you have to understand that truck makers often use the same cab for a wide range of trucks and CMW is absolutely correct in using the F-350 cab for the heavier-duty F-700. Among the exterior parts that do change are the fenders, which grow to accommodate the larger wheels and tires used on the F-700. For that reason, a medium-duty or heavy-duty truck will generally be eight feet wide across the fenders or within a couple inches of that width, and that's where the problem lies. The fenders on the CMW F-350 body are too narrow and the wheel openings are too small. However, as the body is positioned higher on the chassis, which is also prototypical, the tires don't rub.

In my opinion, trimming the axle is a simple fix and the CMW Tank Truck is a good enough model to justify making the small correction. A small oil or fuel distributorship will make a nice addition to your layout and give you a nice switching opportunity as tank cars are spotted to unload. A few of the CMW trucks would complete the scene perfectly.

By the way, if you want to show off how old you are, add a short length of chain to the rear of the truck. The chain should be just long enough to drag a couple of links on the ground. They fell out of favor long ago, but such chains once were used to drain static electricity from fuel trucks to prevent fires.

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Lumpy sits in the cab while his helper handles the dirty part of the job. Coal trucks like this were once common sights as they worked their routes, delivering coal to homes and businesses.

driver comes from Woodland Scenics. Using the same truck body as Tim Burr's Logging, the fine folks in Missouri have created Lumpy's Coal Company. This time, the truck, which looks to be copied from a pre-war Mack EM, carries a coal dump body for delivery to homes and businesses. The set includes the truck and driver, a figure with a shovel, a coal chute, and both open and closed coal bin hatches.

The truck has a nice coal load and the paint and decoration are very good-looking. A check with the calipers showed the truck and bed to be a few inches narrower than might be expected, but still reasonable. The one thing that puzzled me is the single rear wheels. When I looked at the image on the Woodland Scenics web site, the truck had dual rear wheels, which is as it should be. Not sure what happened, but I hope Woodland Scenics adds those two extra wheels back or the singles that are there need to be flattened like the ones on the Tim Burr's Logging truck.

This is a great little set that would be right at home on any layout set from the late 1930s through the 1950s. The Mack E-series remained in production until about 1950, so it wouldn't be out of place right up until the end of the Transition Era. With so many model railroads devoted to coal hauling, it only makes sense to have some trucks to get the coal that last mile to the end user.

See you next month at the grade crossing.

—

I do enjoy hearing from you and comments and corrections are always welcome. You can send an e-mail to: Gradecrossing@modelrailroadnews.com or snail-mail an actual letter to Grade Crossing, Model Railroad News, P.O. Box 1080, Merlin, OR 97532-1080.

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The HO-scale Lumpy's Coal Company set includes the truck, with driver, a helper figure, a coal chute and a delivery door. There is a spare cover if you want to model the door in the closed position. Lumpy's Coal Company is just one of the Woodland Scenics AutoScenes that features driver and passenger figures.

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My Conversion to DCC

Guest Column & Photos by Dick Karnes

PART 2: Preventing Short Circuits

Warning: You may not be finished with your DCC conversion. With DCC, short circuits are your worst enemy. You may be used to that caboose that causes a momentary short when the back of a too-tightly-gauged wheel rubs against the back of an open switch point. Nothing really happens except for a small spark. The train's inertia prevents any noticeable unpleasantness from the momentary short. With DCC, the result is quite different. DCC puts so much amperage on the rails that short-circuit protection takes the highest priority, primarily to prevent severe damage to expensive command-station electronics, and secondarily to prevent welding of wheelsets to rails.

You must acquire devices with your DCC system that shut down immediately upon the onset of a short circuit. Some command stations have this feature; with others you must purchase auxiliary units to manage short circuits. A short will cause every locomotive on the layout to immediately stop, not a pleasant occurrence! One of the more flexible ways to provide short circuit protection is with the four-power-district short protector I use (a **Digitrax** PM42). Such a device allows three power districts to continue receiving power while a short is cleared from the fourth power district.

So what can cause a short, other than the usual occasional derailment? Well, three things come to mind: crossings, reverse loops, and turnouts.

Crossings

Most people's crossings are wired in three different ways:

1. Insulated frogs, thus no special wiring is required.

2. Frog polarity controlled by auxiliary contacts on adjacent turnout motors.

3. Frog polarity controlled by an auxiliary dpdt toggle.

If your crossing corresponds to No. 1, you need do nothing. If your situation is No. 2, you need a more direct way to get power to your crossing frogs to avoid power loss through the switch machine contacts. If you are No. 3, the solution to No. 2 will free you from the dpdt switch. (With DCC, forgetting to flip this switch, and thus incurring a short, has much more dire consequences than it used to with straight DC.)

Your solution is the so-called Auto-Reverser (AR). This electronic device detects a short caused by a metal wheel crossing a gap between two rail segments of differing phase (or "polarity," in old DC jargon). Upon detecting the short, the AR instantaneously flips the phase before either the locomotive motor or the DCC system short protector feel it. See **Figure 1** for a typical application of an AR to a crossing.

But some ARs function more reliable than others. ARs fall into two basic types: adjustable (less expensive) and fixed (about twice the price of adjustables, or more). The adjustable models have potentiometers, just like old-fashioned radio tuners. You need to adjust the "pot" to achieve best results for your spectrum of locomotives. If all of your locomotives have approximately the same current draw (within, say, a quarter amp of each other), then you will be able to find a pot setting that works for all of them. But if your locos have a wide range of current requirements, as mine do (ranging from a quarter amp to two amps), the adjustable AR is not for you, because there is no setting that can distinguish between the need for an auto-reverse versus a dead short for such a range of motor characteristics.

I made the mistake of going for the cheap ARs (five of them). I have replaced all five of mine with a pricier fixed type: the DCC Specialties PSX-AR. These have circuitry robust enough to tell the difference between a real auto-reverse situation and a large (or small) current draw through a motor.

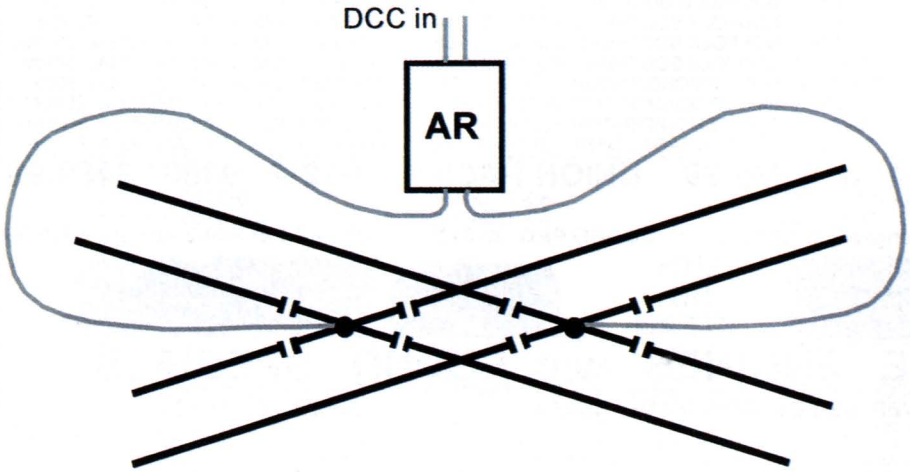

Figure 1. Any crossing can be controlled by an auto-reverser as shown. Figure out which two frogs require phase (polarity) change, isolate them, and connect them to the auto-reverser.

Reverse Loops

Steve dePolo, my local hobby shop owner, was very helpful in teaching me how to handle reverse loops. Basically, he showed me that the reverse loop itself is not the entity that needs to be phase-controlled. Instead, I should think about the track that leads into and out of the reverse loop. I'll illustrate with my own layout. **Figure 2** shows my situation.

I actually don't have any reverse loops per se. Rather, I have a wye (the electrical equivalent of a reverse loop) that connects my terminal area with my double-track main line. Given the likelihood that several locomotives in a terminal might be moving simultaneously and independently, into, out of, and within my terminal, often from two different directions, the last thing I want to do is constantly flip the phase of the current that's feeding them. So, instead of treating my terminal as the entity that must be phase-controlled, I should look at my track plan. The question I should be asking myself is "which portions of the main line, long enough to accommodate my

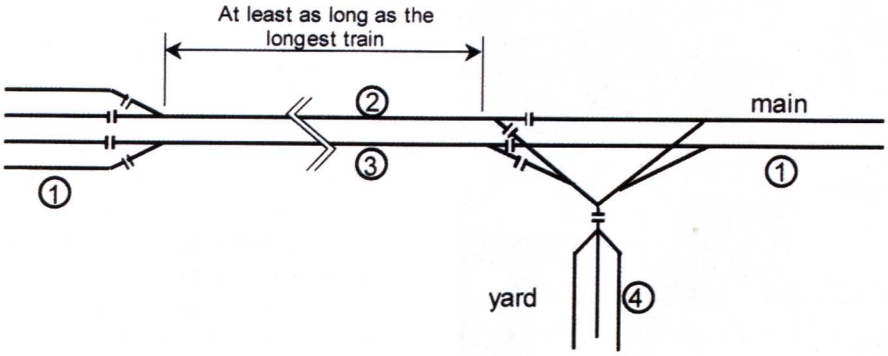

Figure 2. This simplified diagram shows the four power districts, denoted by circled numbers, on the author's layout. Power districts 2 and 3 are auto-reverse sections. Here's how it works: A train leaving the yard via the left-hand wye leg into power district 2 would flip the phase (polarity) of district 2 to match district 4's phase. When the train crosses into power district 1, district 2 again flips its phase to match district 1's phase. With conventional DC, power district 4 would be the only auto-reverse section.

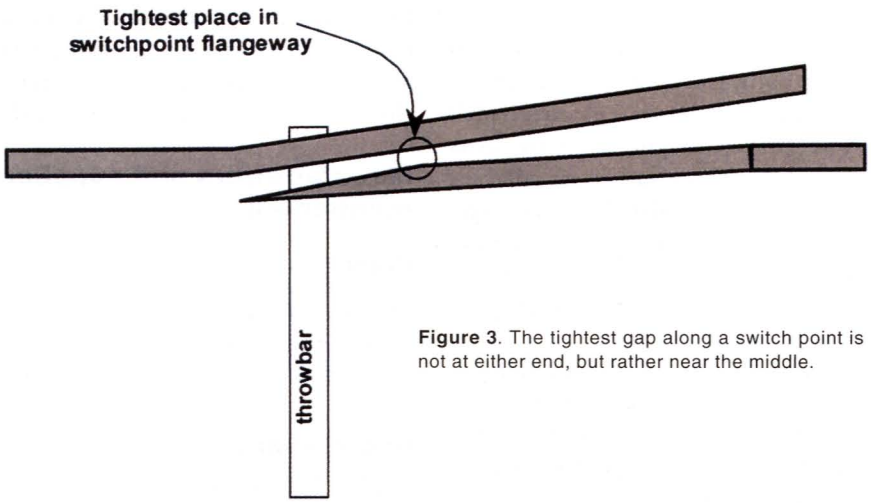

Figure 3. The tightest gap along a switch point is not at either end, but rather near the middle.

longest train but no longer, are candidates for phase control?" **Figure 2** shows what I did. Each of my two phase-flipping main line sections is a separate short-controlled power district with its own "fixed" auto-reverser.

Turnouts

The most likely source of short circuits, once your crossings and reverse loops have been taken care of, is the lowly turnout. That caboose with the too-tight wheel gauge is certainly a culprit. But so is any derailment that might occur on a turnout, and most derailments do occur on turnouts, primarily because the turnout is thrown against the route on which the train is approaching.

Before I tell you what I had to do to my turnouts to make them short proof, I need to sound a warning: Many turnout-throw devices are based on dpdt slide switches; the motion of the slide is transferred to the throw bar via a stiff vertical rod. The dpdt contacts are used to power the frog and possibly drive auxiliary functions such as signaling. I had a large number of these throw mechanisms, actuated via push rods poking through my fascia.

After I converted to DCC, these dpdt contacts gradually began failing, i.e. shorting out during the act of throwing the turnout points. What was happening was that the dead short of the occasional derailment was pumping my DCC booster's full five amps across the half of the dpdt slide switch that controls the frog phase (polarity). Of course the DCC short-circuit protection feature cuts in almost immediately, but not before the transient high current slightly degrades the contacts and the plastic in which they are embedded. After a while, they reach the point where they are "make before break," causing a short when thrown. Now I cannot tell you that your slide-switch turnout mechanisms will suffer the same fate, nor can I tell you which ones will. All I can tell you is what's happening to the 100 slide switches I purchased at my local electronics supply store.

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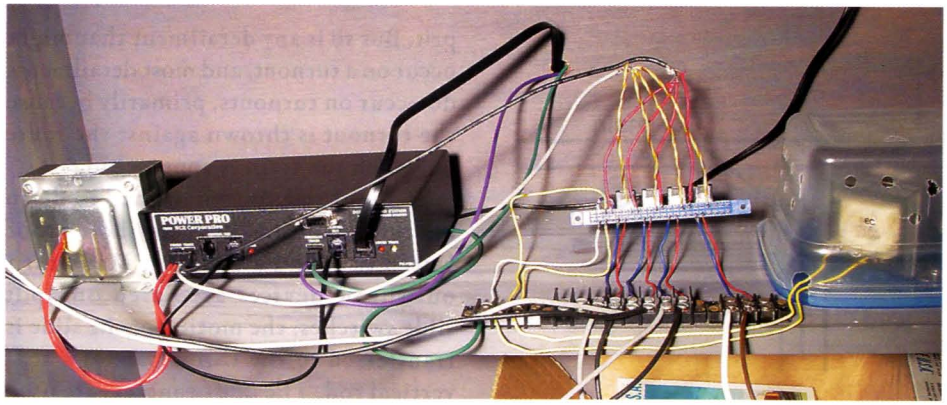

It will help for you to find a place for all your DCC equipment that can be centralized. The author uses a shelf on a spare bookcase under the layout for (left to right) the power supply, power station, power-district manager, and auxiliary transformer for the power-district manager. This last item, from Radio Shack, has exposed bare wires on both the primary and secondary side. To avoid shock hazard, the transformer is mounted on an upside-down plasticware lid. The cover is the inverted plastic-ware bowl that matches the lid. Holes are punched into the bowl for cooling air circulation.

As my slide switches fail, I replace them with Blue Points, with which I am quite happy.

Okay, so what about those turnouts? Well, a colleague of mine swears that there is no need for such a thing as a DCC-compatible turnout. He claims that if your turnouts and your wheelsets all conform to NMRA wheel and track standards, the back of a metal wheel cannot possibly rub against the back of an open switch point. But we live in a real world, not an ideal one, wherein if anything can go wrong, it will. And my colleague is also dead wrong with respect to small-frog-angle turnouts (larger than No. 6). For these long turnouts, the tightest dimension between an open point and its adjacent stock rail is not at the end of the point, but rather where the point bevel begins, about a third of the way up the point from its feathered end (**Figure 3**). So even if your point spread conforms to the NMRA standard, back-of-the-wheel rub is still possible.

So what to do? Simple. Completely isolate your turnout frog with four rail gaps. If your isolated frog length is smaller than your shortest electrical pick-up wheelbase, all you have to do is ground each closure rail to its adjacent stock rail. If your isolated frog is longer than your shortest pick-up wheelbase, then you must power your frog from one of the spdt sets of contacts on your turnout-throw mechanism.

Short of derailments (I can't help you here!), we've dealt with every possible source of short circuits except one: the locomotive that approaches the frog end of a turnout that's set against its route. If your frog is isolated, you will have no problem. But if your frog is powered, you'll have a short as soon as the first metal wheel of the locomotive crosses the first frog gap. The simplest way to avoid this sort of short is to isolate about eight inches or so of rail beyond the frog. Power this rail with the switch machine's auxiliary contacts so they make the rail dead if the turnout is thrown counter to the route the loco is about to take.

Often, only one of the two diverging tracks needs to be treated this way. This fact is obvious for a spur, for which the spur's rail leading to the frog should not be gapped. The spur will be dead unless the turnout is thrown for the spur, so only the main line needs to be protected. Another case is a passing siding, for which a right-hand-running rule (or left-hand rule for C&NW fans!) requires just one of these stopping rail sections at each turnout. If you want to run trains in both directions on both passing-siding tracks, then you should have two of these stopping rails at each turnout. If you have a junction where two separate lines merge into one, you have the same requirement. Some turnout-throw mechanisms have enough contacts for this; some do not. Choose carefully!

Manufacturers and suppliers mentioned:

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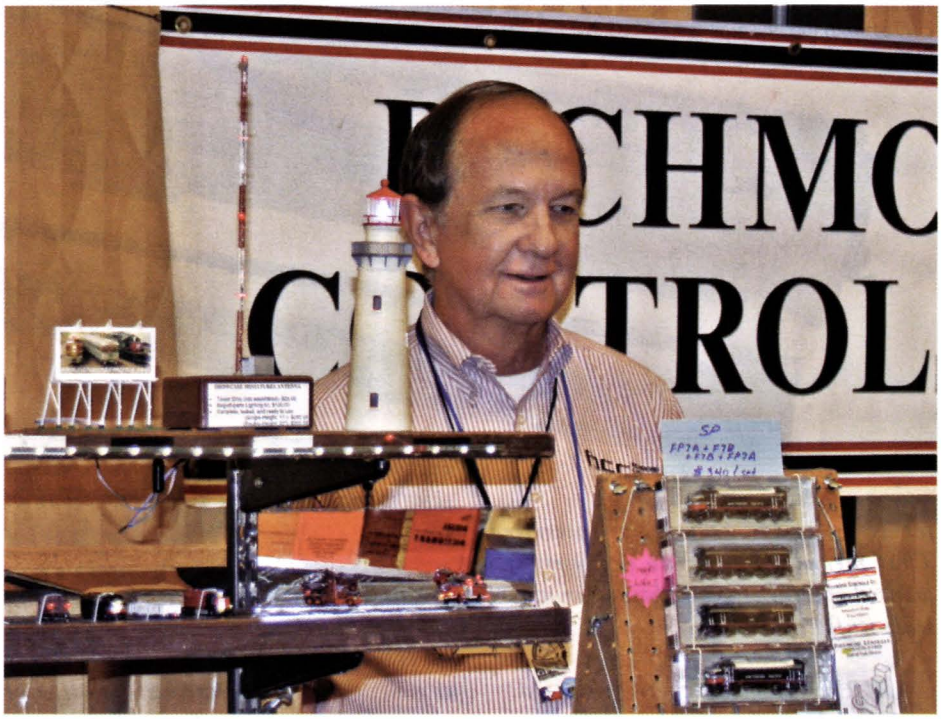
A Chat with Jim Hinds of Richmond Controls

N DEPTH

BY PHIL SCANDURA — Many things help bring a model railroad to life; lots of people, animation, sound, and lighting to name but a few. I've tried all of these, but find that lighting is one of the simplest and most striking effects. Whether it be structures, streets, vehicles, passenger cars, or locomotives, when the room lights are dimmed a well-lit layout truly sparkles. Today we'll be talking with Jim Hinds, sole proprietor of **Richmond Controls** and maker of EZ-LITE lighting systems. The product line includes special effects lighting, constant intensity lighting, FRED (flashing rear-end device) flashers, caboose lighting, passenger car lighting, and an extensive line of LEDs. But rather than listen to me, let's talk with Jim.



You can find the Richmond Control's booth at various conventions and shows, including those presented by the Southern Pacific Historical & Technical Society, and the Santa Fe Railway Historical & Modeling Society. Jim truly enjoys chatting with customers, so don't be shy. Introduce yourself!

Take It Away, Jim!

MRN: How did you get started in model railroading?

JH: *When I was very young, my Mother took me every year at Christmas to see the huge* ***Lionel*** *layout set up at Foley's department store in Houston. I loved it. When I was five years old, she nailed four bed slats into a frame, covered that with Masonite hardboard, painted it green, and set up a Marx 0-27 layout for a Christmas gift. I was hooked.*

MRN: Do you have a favorite scale (and why)?

JH: *Like many others, I went from O-scale tinplate to HO scale. In college, I abandoned trains in favor of other interests (cars, girls, beer, and lots of studying). While in graduate school, my neighbor showed me an N-scale layout he had made on a hollow-core door. That was an instant re-addiction.*

A short time later, Suzie, my wife, and I drove down to San Antonio and I bought a Con-Cor Santa Fe PA1, my favorite locomotive, and some related stuff, and that marked my official conversion to N scale. I was then able to set up a 3 foot x 8 foot layout in my small apartment.

I prefer N scale to the other scales because it allows me to run long trains behind long locomotive lashups in a reasonable-sized room. I'm not a detail fanatic except when it comes to lighting.

MRN: Do you have a favorite prototype? And why?

JH: *After I wore out the* ***Marx*** *0-27 set, my Father bought me a Lionel train set featuring the famous Santa Fe Warbonnet F3 A-B-A lashup — that made me really love the Santa Fe. But I grew up in Houston, a Southern Pacific town. So I like them both.*

MRN: Are you a freelancer, prototype modeler, or somewhere in-between?

JH: I am somewhere in-between. My layout is very loosely based on the Santa Fe mainline through Arizona. But in my world, the Southern Pacific has full trackage rights - Rule #1.

MRN: What prompted you to start Richmond Controls?

JH: *During the decade of the 1970s, I acquired quite a few* ***Atlas*** *SD45s and* ***Model Power*** *RSD15s. The power pickup was not good on either, and I didn't like the weak lighting. So I developed etched brass wheel wipers to give these locomotives better power pickup and also to allow for MU connections, to make them run more reliably. I also developed lighting circuits for bright constant intensity headlights, flashing beacons, and caboose and passenger car interior lights and taillights, because I wanted them for myself.*

When locomotive designs changed to the now familiar split chassis, there was no longer enough room for my circuits. That forced me to learn to use surface mount components so I could equip locomotives with lighting circuits without having to chop any metal out of the chassis.

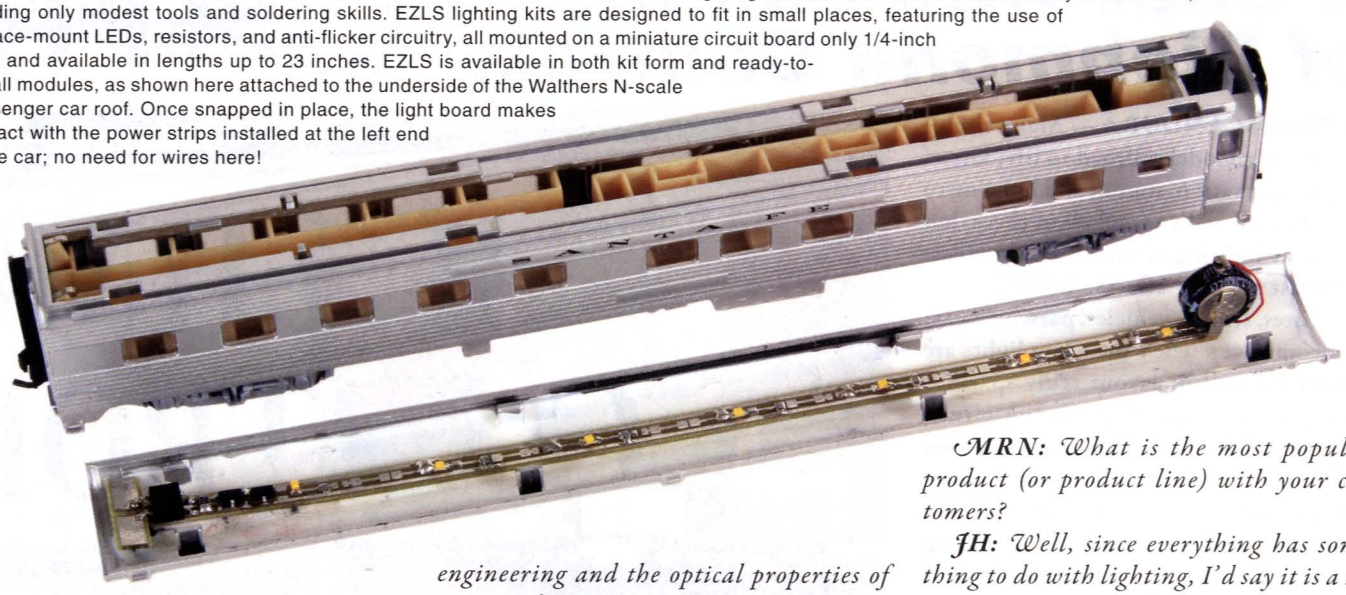
Later, I discovered that other people wanted the same things, and doing surface mount circuit boards was expensive. I decided to start selling to others as a way to spread the high cost of development and circuit board fabrication.

MRN: How long has Richmond Controls been in business?

JH: *Officially, since 1994. At that time, I was working my regular job during the daytime and building model railroad circuits at night. When I received a buy-out offer from my boss sometime in the late 1990s, I jumped at it and started doing Richmond Controls full time.*

I had tried to convince a supplier of HO-scale lighting circuits to make some

A new and exciting product from Richmond Controls is the EZ-LITE Lighting Strip (EZLS) product line. EZLS can be used for interior lighting of passenger cars, cabooses, and buildings in all scales. EZLS offers a low-cost lighting solution that can be assembled by the modeler, needing only modest tools and soldering skills. EZLS lighting kits are designed to fit in small places, featuring the use of surface-mount LEDs, resistors, and anti-flicker circuitry, all mounted on a miniature circuit board only 1/4-inch wide and available in lengths up to 23 inches. EZLS is available in both kit form and ready-to-install modules, as shown here attached to the underside of the Walthers N-scale passenger car roof. Once snapped in place, the light board makes contact with the power strips installed at the left end of the car; no need for wires here!



for N scale, and he was not interested. That meant I had to do it myself if I wanted special effect lighting for my N scale stuff.

***MRN:** How was it getting started?*

***JH:** I had already been doing everything, either as a hobby or in my work life, so everything was already in place. At work, I had designed control systems, electronic circuits, and circuit boards. I had been an Engineering Director and a C.E.O., so I knew how to do the engineering documentation and financial stuff. In my favorite job as Director of Engineering at **Martin-Decker** in Austin (a manufacturer of oilfield instruments), I had traveled extensively with the sales crew, so I knew that side of things. I had received extensive training in Quality Theory and systems, and that was quite beneficial. And my education focused on electronic engineering and the optical properties of semiconductors, so I had a nice bag of tricks.*

***MRN:** Is it "just a business" or is it a "labor of love?"*

***JH:** It is both. Some famous person once commented that you know you really like your job if you look up from what you are doing at 2:00 AM and can't remember whether you are working or playing. That's me.*

***MRN:** What is your favorite product (or product line) that Richmond Controls offers?*

***JH:** I like the special effects modules (Mars Lights, etc.) and the Golden White LEDs. I believe my special effects lighting modules were the first ever offered in N scale. The Golden White LEDs were my idea and I actually made the first one myself, so I'm really proud (and a bit surprised) that those things have done so well.*

***MRN:** What is the most popular product (or product line) with your customers?*

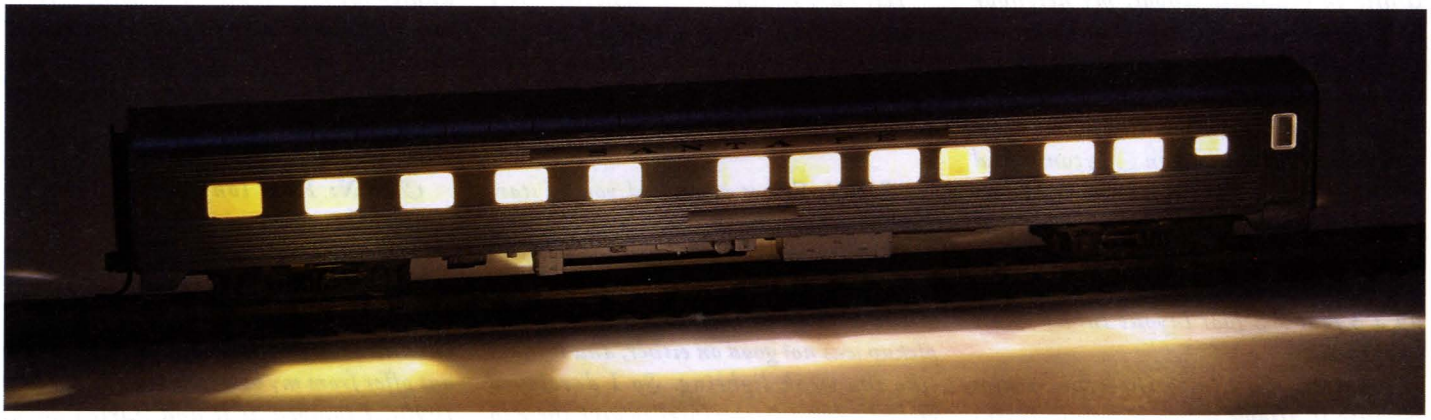
***JH:** Well, since everything has something to do with lighting, I'd say it is a tie between the special effects modules and the LEDs.*

***MRN:** Can you give us a hint about what's on the horizon for Richmond Controls in the coming months?*

***JH:** The nature of my product line is such that when some large manufacturer comes out with a new product and people in the hobby request something different in the way of lighting, I can quickly come up with something that they like. Recent examples are the N-scale **Kato** GS4 and **Walthers** passenger cars. I know that track powered, low current, constant intensity, battery-free but flicker-free lighting for the **Rapido** and **Intermountain** passenger cars will come soon, as soon as I get my hands on the cars.*

***MRN:** Do you have any words of wisdom or advice for our readers?*

***JH:** Try to get yourself an understand-*



Here we see the lighting affect in the Walthers N-scale passenger car. Night shots can be tricky, often resulting in lighting that looks brighter than it actually is, such as in this shot (in person the effect is much more subdued). What I really like about the EZLS is the wonderful evenness of the lighting along the length of the car. When you order the EZLS, you can specify the color of the LEDs, their desired brightness, locations on the board, and many other options. Visit the Richmond Controls web site www.richmondcontrols.com for complete ordering information.

ing and supportive spouse like mine.

MRN: Thanks very much for taking the time to speak with Model Railroad News *today!*

JH: My pleasure!

Where to Find Richmond Controls Products

Visit the Richmond Controls web site, ask for Jim's products at your favorite hobby shop, or look for the flashing lights of Jim's booth at various conventions and shows. As Jim readily admits, his lighting products "show best in person" so it's no surprise the Richmond Control's booth is loaded with demonstrator locomotives, rolling stock, and more: all fully lit. It's quite a sight to see!

Moving On...

It's been nearly four years since I began writing for *MRN* on a regular basis. It all started with a guest column for "Thinking of DCC," next came product reviews, then Associate Editor, the N-Depth column, and of course the Project DCC series.

In recent months new and exciting opportunities have presented themselves that have necessitated a change in my priorities. I wish there was enough time to do everything, but we all know that never happens. So I've stepped down as Associate Editor and this will be my last N-Depth column. Model railroading is in my blood, so I won't disappear completely. Project DCC still has a handful of installments left, and you'll still see the occasional product review from me in future editions. It's been a fun experience and I've enjoyed contributing to *MRN* and the model railroading community. Thanks for the opportunity to do so.

—

Feel free to E-mail any comments or questions about N scale in general to: ndepth@modelrailroadnews.com. Or write to: N-Depth, c/o Model Railroad News, P.O. Box 1080, Merlin, OR 97532-1080. Suggestions, contributions, and announcements are all welcome.

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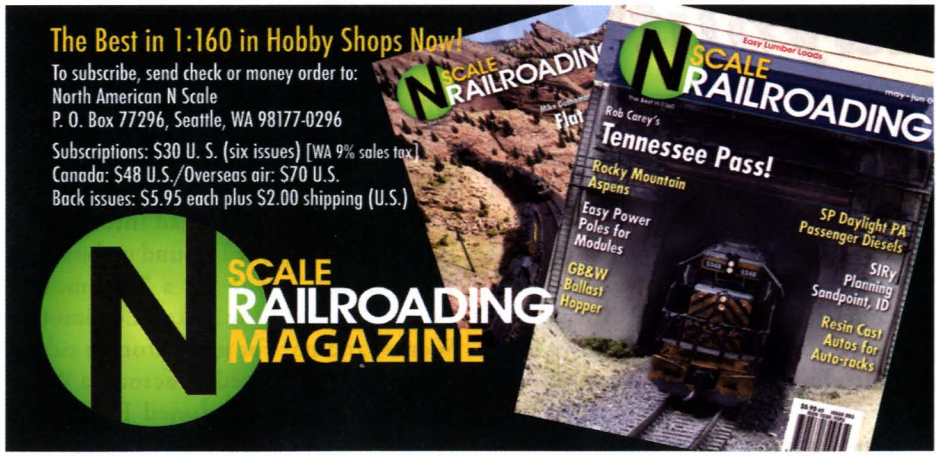
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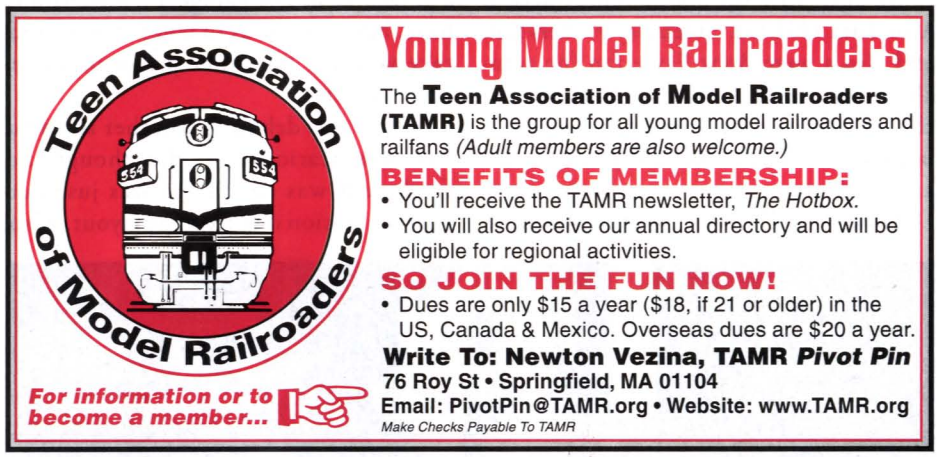
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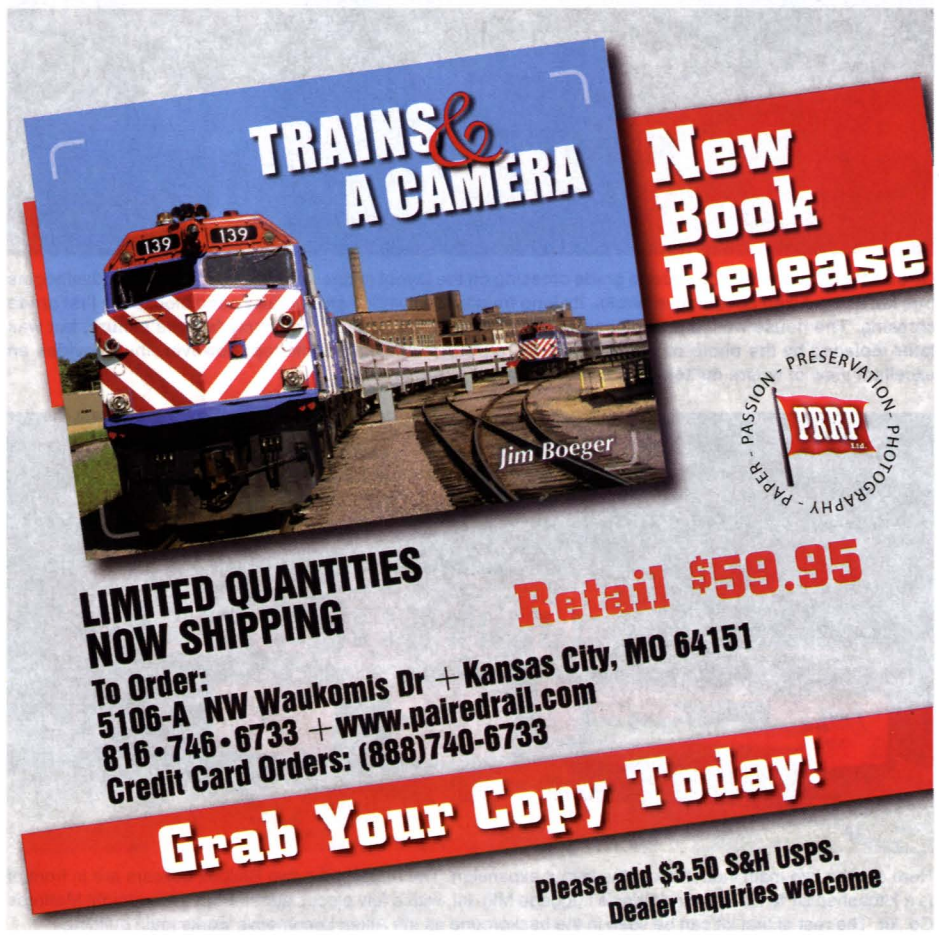

Layout Anywhere

BY SAWYER BERRY — Since I didn't take the time to introduce myself the last time I wrote an article, I'll go ahead and give y'all an introduction. My name is Sawyer Berry, I'm a 14 year old who has loved trains since he can first remember. I love playing sports for my school as well as model railroading (football this past year, probably track next year). I've lived in Aiken for all but six months of my life (three months in Connecticut when I was two, and three months in Texas when I was four), and I love the South, and America. Also, I am a HUGE Green Bay Packers fan, and also a huge Brett Favre fan (he actually is the reason I became a Packers fan; this was the first season when Brett wasn't our starter since I've been alive). So, there's a little about me.

Now, why I'm writing this. About a year ago or so, I got bored, looked at my desk, and thought "I can put a layout on there." Previously, all my layouts had been in the attic. I put down a loop, as well as two switches. I had intended for a passing siding, but I wound up building two sidings — one for a "locomotive builder" (named the Aiken Locomotive Works) and one for just a storage siding. The scenery involved a factory, a dense pine forest, an abandoned Bachmann freight station, a house, and a garage (not a garage as in the garage a house would have, but a garage as in where you would take your car for a lube job or brake inspection, etc.).

I later was debating whether to add a passenger station, and I did, though the farthest it was completed was just putting the station down on the layout. Also, there was a piece of track that I use for holding a dummy **Bachmann** F7 painted for my freelanced-and-no-longer-modeled Southeastern Continental Rwy., and later, for whatever locomotive I had built for Aiken Locomotive Works. My favorite scenes were most likely the abandoned freight station, Lone Pine curve (named for a lone pine tree planted right along the curve, which is where the freight station was located), and also the lot of Aiken Locomotive Works. I never got around to adding figures or anything.

GP30 #128 approaches the second grade crossing on the layout in one lap around, if the locomotive begins that lap at the Aiken Locomotive Works. Its long train tails down the straightaway and blocks the first grade crossing. The house was later replaced with the garage. This was originally my favorite picture, but was later replaced by the photo of the NW Geep. I regret not having a backdrop; however, this provides an excellent view of where my television was in relation to the layout.

Here are the two main industries of the layout expansion. The building the two Railbox boxcars are in front of is a kitbashed DPM kit, mainly a Gripp's Luggage Mfg. kit, with a few pieces added from a Goodnight Mattress Co. kit. The rest of that kit can be seen in the background as the Aiken Locomotive works main building.

I later added a layout extension that went from being a maintenance yard to an industrial park that had four industries. I only had the building for one of the four industries though.

Benchwork

While benchwork is what usually haunts most model railroaders' dreams, mine was relatively simple. In fact, the toughest part was finding a place to put all the things I had previously on my workbench to clear the way for the layout. I then squirted out a good amount of tacky glue, spread it around with a scrap piece of pink foam, and placed it. When I added the extension, I just cut pink foam to fit the area I had left on the desktop, and then disguised the seam with lichen. I used Liquid Nails (not a new canister, but just a little my dad had left over in a small tube) to hold the foam down.

Track Laying & Wiring

My preferred roadbed is the **Woodland Scenics** foam roadbed. Now I know some of you are probably groaning right about now, but I love using this stuff. It's very easy to use, and also very easy to trim; just get a pair of scissors

This became my favorite shot of the layout. It is also one of the few with a backdrop. The location is Lone Pine Curve, named for a single tall pine tree planted along it. The abandoned freight station is also along this curve. The NW Geep is an eBay win, and was my favorite locomotive, until I bought my U23B. I think I used the macro function on the camera for this. Light was provided by the skylight in my room.

from the kitchen or wherever! The track was unpainted **Atlas** Code 80, and the turnouts were trimmed #6s (also Atlas). There were no ground throws, and no switch machines; I just used my hands to align the turnout and make sure that no cars picked the points. No wonder I hated switching! The wiring was no fancier than two Atlas terminal rail joiners — no soldering to be found.

Scenery

The basic scenery is Woodland Scenics turf; different shades of green as well as a dead grass yellow or something similar. The pine trees were Woodland Scenics premade trees, and the few deciduous trees I made from Woodland Scenics tree armatures and ground foam. The structures were a mix of DPM and Bachmann models. I made the asphalt lot using a Woodland Scenics road kit, and the dirt road I made with what I think were cinders. I cut up several pieces of old locomotives and cars to make the scrap yard by the Locomotive Works.

Operation

The most I operated this layout was attempting to switch boxcars in and out of the Aiken Locomotive Works. Mostly, I would just put a few cars and a locomotive on the track, crank up the power pack, and watch it run in circles.

Layout anywhere?

I shoehorned a layout onto my desktop. Wonder what ideas you can come up with to one-up me?

—

If you have any questions, comments, tips, or suggestions concerning this column or model railroading in general, send them to: The Future of Model Railroading, c/o Model Railroad News, P.O. Box 1080, Merlin, OR 97532-1080 or e-mail to: tamr@modelrailroadnews.com.

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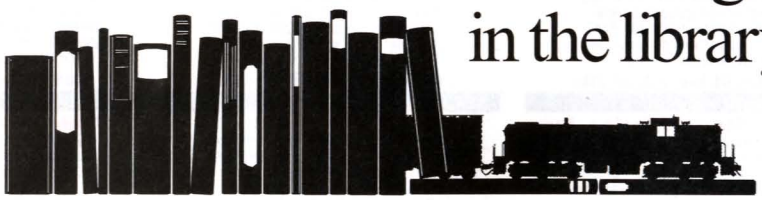

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Ads will appear in print, and on our web site during the month of the cover dated edition.

Please submit your ad at least 6 weeks prior to the cover date that you wish it to appear.

Ad Deadline: Classified ads for the July 09 issue must be received by May 15th, 2009.

Classified ads can be viewed online at **www.ModelRailroadNews.com**

FOR SALE: HO/OO British — HO European LSSAE for each list. Also have diecast of various scales. Branch Lines Ltd., 1200 N Branch Rd, Wilmette, IL 60091-1035; (847) 256-4294.

CUSTOM BOAT/SHIP MODELS! All scales/types. Free catalog. S. White, 4223 Chestnut Dr., Center Valley, PA 18034.

Photos, PRR! Have over 320 photos taken by PRR people. Most 8 x 10, few 9 1/2 x 6 1/2. All black & white. Gondolas, hoppers, flats & cabin cars. Sell as lot only in 3 ring binders – $650. Bill Powell, 306 Broad St., Williamstown, NJ 08094; (845) 728-1327 until 9:00 pm.

WANTED: Back issues of Scale Coupler; Code 70 Sharohara NS double crossovers, junk ones OK; dual gauge crossing. David Jerry, PO Box 56305, Phoenix, AZ 85079-6305; (602) 361-0356.

HO BUILDINGS FOR SALE: BR502 CNR Emporium, BR5028 Icehouse, BR5023 Depot all Woodland; 611 Atlas Colonial Home +. All mint, in the box. Credit crunch! All offers considered. Phone (702) 871-0620 early evenings.

SWOP my HO ten never opened packets of assorted figures Preisner (inc Boy Scouts), Noch, Woodland, and more. WANTED: On30 figures, buildings, stock W.H.Y. E-mail: laurascot2@cox.net

VARNEY PARTS CATALOG, $15 PP Original, Reproduction Parts: Locomotives, Tenders, Freight Cars. Restoration Train Parts, 135 Richwood Drive, Gloversville, NY 12078; (518) 725-4446.

O-GAUGE 3-Rail locomotives, rolling stock, track, accessories for sale. Send #10 SASE for pictures and prices to: Bill Pyper, P.O. Box 885, Salem, OR 97308-0885; or e-mail: rrbill10@comcast.net for pdf.

A FATHER & SON TEAM – Looking for large High-Quality Brass & Plastic Collections. We buy your Entire Collection, not just the cream. Over $500,000 Available. Please call Dan Toll Free at 1-877-227-5557 or mail a list to: Dan Glasure, PO Box 830175, Ocala, FL 34483-0175 or E-Mail: dan@DansTrainDepot.com

TRAINS new and used. Parts and repairs. Model railroad magazines all gauges. Also videos & DVDs. (206) 330-3628 ask for Brad.

WANTED: Master Rail Models HO deck girder bridge kits 60 or 90 ft spans. Top $$. Call Rick, (209) 380-5010.

HO SCALE locos and rolling stock DVDs, decals, & magazines. Fred Cesefske, 4049 Pine Grove Ave, Ft Gratiot, MI 48059.

WANTED: ORIGINAL HOWARD FOGG train paintings. John Atherton (845) 471- 8152; E-mail: JJAAMAPOU@aol.com

WANTED: HO Scale Dumpsters by Cal-Freight #5110 & #5115. Call Ernie, (503) 622-3573; e-mail: ecarlson@xprt.net

STEAM WHISTLES Brass 1-J.E. Lonergan 7", 1-Lunkenheimer 11", & NP loco bell. Open for bids! Email: railfun@verizon.net

WANT O-27 traditional size NY Central RR items. Send your "For Sale" lists to: hals14@bellsouth.net

BEAUTIFUL ORIGINAL RAIL ART! Nationally known artists. Call Vern at (717) 464-3481 or see at www.vsrailart.com

HO AUTOS: $3.00 and $4.00! SASE for list: Husarik, 12710 54th Ave., W Mukilteo, WA 98275; (425) 493-2588.

HO BUILDINGS FOR SALE: BR502 CNR Emporium, BR5028 Icehouse, BR5023 Depot all Woodland; 611 Atlas Colonial Home +. All mint, in the box. Credit crunch! All offers considered. Phone (702) 871-0620 early evenings.

HO FOR SALE: Challenger B&O EMI SP AC12 AC7 W&R NP S4 W3 A1 HWT pass cars PFM GN. Shawn Stevens (541) 862-2039.

WANTED: N-Scale Magazines March/April 2006 and Sept/Oct 2006 issues only. Call Neal, (603) 863-7185.

FREE* CLASSIFIED ADS!

NOTE:** Free Classified Ads are for NON-COMMERCIAL ADS ONLY, First Four Lines Only, Additional Lines are $1.50 Per Line, One Free Ad Per Issue, No Mail Order Ads. **Commercial Ads are $1.50 Per Line with a Four Line Minimum (Minimum $6.00)

Classified Ad Order Form

Name _____ Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____ – _____

Daytime Phone _____ Fax _____

All ads must be prepaid. Use the boxes below to write your ad, placing one character (including spaces) in each box. Approximately 27 characters will fit on a line. The first two or three words will be typeset in ***BOLD CAPS*** at no additional charge if desired. ***Please include contact information in your ad copy below (phone number, address, Email address, etc.)***

☐ ***Check here for BOLD CAPS.*** Publisher reserves the right to edit and/or abbreviate copy to fit available space.

1
2
3
4 *EXTRA LINES @ $1.50/LINE*

Sample Ad: AMERICAN FLYER LOCO, Classic 1950s era 4-6-0. Excellent condition. $125 obo. 503-555-1212 after 5pm Pacific.

NOTE: If you need a larger ad, please TYPE the copy for the ad and estimate the number of lines you will use. To calculate the number of lines, simply count the total number of characters+numbers+spaces and divide by 27.

Number of lines _____ x $1.50 = $ _____

Please Make Your Check Payable To: Model Railroad News — or Use Your Credit Card...

Send To: Model Railroad News
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Name (as it appears on card): _____ Phone: (_____) _____

Credit Card Number: _____ – _____ – _____ – _____ Exp Date: _____

Signature (required): _____

EVENTS & ACTIVITIES

Events for the July 2009 issue must be received by May 15th, 2009

Attn. Clubs & Show Sponsors — Place your FREE event announcement in front of thousands of readers! Let them know about your special event! Send your announcement to us at least three months prior to the event for maximum coverage. Write to: Events, c/o Model Railroad News, P.O. Box 1080, Merlin, OR 97532-1080. You can fax us your event at: (541) 955-0346; or e-mail: events@modelrailroadnews.com

Free trial subscription cards of Model Railroad News are available upon request for show and meet attendees. Call, fax, or e-mail for details.

Events & Activities can be viewed online at www.ModelRailroadNews.com

Arkansas, Conway — The Central Arkansas Model Railroad Club (CAMRC) will be having a meeting on June 27th, at McGee Center, 3800 College Avenue. Hours will be from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Attractions to include HO modular layout, and workshops. Admission is free. For more information, contact: Daniel Gladstone, P.O. Box 1825, Conway, AR 72032; (501) 269-3030; e-mail: ca_mrc@yahoo.com; www.artrains.org

California, San Diego (Balboa Park) — The San Diego Model Railroad Museum will be hosting a Swap Meet on May 9th, in the Pacific Beach room at the Museum, 1649 El Prado. Hours will be from 7:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. Admission: $2.00; $5.00, to sell. Please bring your own table if you plan to sell. Museum hours are 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Tuesday thru Friday; and from 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Saturday and Sunday. Admission: $6.00, adults; $5.00, seniors; $3.00, students with I.D.; $2.50, active military, and children under 15 admitted free. For more information, contact: the San Diego Model Railroad Museum, 1649 El Prado, San Diego, CA 92101; call (619) 696-0199; e-mail: Aparra@sdmrm.org; or visit www.sdmrm.org

Colorado, Greeley — The Northern Colorado Division, Rocky Mountain Region, NMRA's Regional Convention will be held May 21-24, at the Clarion Hotel & Conference Center, 701 8th Street. Attractions to include layout tours, op sessions, clinics, prototype tours, non-rail events, banquet with guest speaker, and a hobo breakfast. For more information, call: Mark Ostrander, (970) 532-2926. For hours, and registration costs, visit: www.2009-rmr-nmra.org

Colorado, Greeley — The Greeley Freight Station Museum's Grand Opening will be held May 23-24th in conjunction with the NMRA Rocky Mountain Regional Convention and 2009 "Trains on the Plains" Train Show, at the Greeley Freight Station Museum, 680 10th Street. Hours will be from 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. the first Friday of the month, and from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Saturdays. Attractions to include their 5,500 square foot HO-scale layout with 20.5 scale miles of mainline track through September 7th. Admission: $6.00, adults; $5.00, seniors 65 and over; $3.00, children 12 and under; babies in strollers or arms and the disabled admitted free. Group rates available. For more information, call: Dave Trussell, (970) 392-2934; or visit www.gfsm.org

Colorado, Greeley — The Northern Colorado Model Railroad Club's Trains on the Plains Show will be held May 23-24, at the Exhibition Building, Island Grove Regional Park, 501 N. 14th Avenue. Hours will be from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Saturday, and from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on Sunday. Attractions to include 9 display layouts; 25 vendors, a R/C airplane display, and plastic model displays. Admission: $5.00, adults; children under 12 admitted free w/paid adult. For more information, contact: William (Bill) Beranek, (970) 416-1945; e-mail: williamberanek@msn.com; www.trains-on-the-plains.com

Colorado, Lakewood — The Foothills Society of Model Railroaders' Model Railroad and Toy Train Swap Meet will be held on May 16th, at Christ on the Mountain Church, 13922 W. Utah Avenue. Meet hours will be from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon. Admission: $3.00, adults; $1.50, over 64 or under 12. For more information, call George, (303) 989-0087; or Eric, (303) 985-1491.

Florida, Floral City — Regal Railways will be sponsoring a Train Show on May 30th, at Adventureland, 6440 South Florida Avenue (U.S. 41). Hours will be from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Attractions to include a small layout. Admission: $4.00, adults; children under 13 admitted free. For more information, call Joe Schramm, (727) 244-1341; or visit: www.regalrailways.com

Florida, Fort Myers — Gulf Coast Express III - NMRA Sunshine Region Spring Convention will be held May 8-10, at the Clarion Hotel, 12635 S. Cleveland Avenue. Attractions to include: fourteen clinics, an operating session, model contests, special spouse events, and layout tours. Non-NMRA members are welcome. For more information, contact: Peter Gross, (239) 731-3645; or visit www.scalerails.org

Florida, Largo — Suncoast Model Railroad Club will be holding a Train Show & Club Open House on June 13th. Railroad show will be at Minnreg Hall, 6340 126th Avenue. Hours will be from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Attractions to include over 100 tables of model trains and railroad paraphernalia. Club Open House with operating HO- and N-scale layouts will be at the Suncoast Model Railroad Club House, 12355 62nd Street North, Suite A. Train Show admission: $5.00, adults; $1.00, ages 12-17; under 11 admitted free. Admission to Club House is free. Plenty of free parking is available. For more information, call (727) 523-1860; or e-mail: info@suncoastmrrc.com

Florida, Pinellas Park — Regal Railways will be sponsoring a Train Show on May 2nd, at the Florida Knights of Columbus Hall, 7177 58th Street. Hours will be from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Attractions to include vendors and a small layout. Admission: $4.00, adults; children under 13 admitted free. For more information, contact: Joe Schramm, (727) 244-1341.

Florida, Tallahassee — The Big Bend Model Railroad Association will be sponsoring their annual Tallahassee Model Railroad Show & Sale on June 20th, at the North Florida Fairgrounds, 441 Paul Russell Road, Building #4. Hours will be from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Admission: $5.00, adults; children 12 and under admitted free. For more information, contact: BBMRA Train Show, P.O. Box 3392, Tallahassee, FL 32315-3392; John Sullenberger, (850) 544-1870 (if no answer, leave message on voice mail); e-mail: sullyjws@aol.com; www.bbmra.org

Illinois, Homewood — The 6th Annual Homewood Rail Heritage Day will be held on May 17th, at Village of Homewood Municipal Center Park District Auditorium, located at Dixie Highway and Chestnut. Hours will be from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Attractions to include Train Show with layouts, displays, and railroad memorabilia. Location is adjacent to the Canadian National (former Illinois Central) mainline. Annual railroad slide show will be held on May 16th, at Saint Joseph Church gymnasium, 17949 Dixie Highway. Hours will be from 7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. Admission to both events is free. For more information, call (708) 957-7944; e-mail: d.gunderson@sbcglobal.net

Illinois, Oak Park — The Oak Park Society of Model Engineers will be having an Open House on Saturday, May 3rd, in their clubroom located on the lower level of the Dole Learning Center, 255 Augusta Street. Hours will be from 12:01 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. Attractions to include operating HO trains, including Thomas, their Chicago passenger station, Oak Park area, quarry, and other Illinois plans. You'll even have a chance to operate engines in one of their classification yards or on their portable layout. Admission is free. For more information, contact: Henry Kranz, 221 Clinton Avenue, Oak Park, IL 60302-3113; voice: (708) 848-5716; cell: (708) 302-4231; fax: (630) 604-1115.

Illinois, Wheaton — The Great Midwest Train Show will be held on May 3rd, at the DuPage County Fairgrounds, 2015 W. Manchester Road. Show hours will be from 9:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Admission: $7.00, adults; children under 12 admitted free. For more information, contact: Great Midwest Train Show, P.O. Box 34, Elmhurst, IL 60126; (630) 290-1962; fax: (240) 597-4482; www.greatmidwesttrainshow.com

Maryland, Baltimore — Thomas the Tank Engine will be returning to the B&O Railroad Museum on May 1-3. B&O Railroad Museum is located at 901 W. Pratt Street. Tickets are $18.00 for ages 2 and up. Advance purchase is recommended. For more information, call (866) 468-7630; or visit: www.ticketweb.com/dowt For a calendar of events at the Baltimore & Ohio Museum, visit: www.borail.org/special-events.shtml

Maryland, Cumberland — The Maryland-West Virginia Model Railroad Association of Cumberland, Maryland will be having a Train Show on May 2nd, at the Allegany County Fairgrounds, Route 220 South. Hours will be from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Attractions will include a show and sale, as well as indoor and outdoor operating layouts in HO- and G- scales. Admission: $3.00, adults; under 12 admitted free. For more information, contact: Eric Clark, MD-WV Model Railroad Association, P.O. Box 696, Ridgeley, WV 26753; (304) 726-4395; e-mail: eclark327@hotmail.com

Maryland, Timonium — The "Great Scale Model Train Show" will be held June 27-28th, at the Maryland State Fairgrounds, 2200 York Road. Show hours will be from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on Saturday, and from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on Sunday. Attractions will include the Mason-Dixon Large Scale Railroad Society's garden layout, train movies for children and adults, clinics and demonstrations, over 450 tables of model trains, and HiRail/Tinplate trains for sale. Refreshments will be available; parking is free. Admission: $9.00, adults; children under 15 admitted free; $18.00, family. For more information, contact: Howard Zane, 5236 Thunder Hill Road, Columbia, MD 21045; (410) 730-1036; e-mail: hzane1@comcast.net; www.gsmts.com

Minnesota, Alexandria — The Alexandria Model Railroad Association will be hosting the 14th Annual Greater Minnesota Train Show on May 2nd, at the Runestone Community Center, 998 3rd Avenue West. Hours will be from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Attractions to include memorabilia, and a flea market. Admission: $3.00, adults; under 10 admitted free. For more information, contact: Dave Brosh, (320) 283-5850; or visit www.geocities.com/lamrra

Minnesota, Hutchinson — Luce Line Railroad Club will be hosting the 2009 Thousand Lakes Region/NMRA Convention "Three Roads to Hutch," on May 29-31, at the Best Western Victorian Inn, 1000 State Hwy. 7 W. The convention will feature model and photo contests, railroad history presentations, and model clinics including a hands-on clinic by nationally known NMRA Master Model Railroaders Fran and Miles Hale. There will also be visits to the Twin Cities & Western RR shops in Glencoe, and the museum in the Great Northern Depot in Dassel. For more information, contact: Terry Davis, (320) 587-7820; e-mail: ptdavis@hutchtel.net, or visit: www.thousandlakesregion.org

Ohio, Coshocton — The Coshocton Model Railroad Club will be having a Model Railroad Open House on May 9th, at the Coshocton County Fairgrounds, 707 Kenilworth Avenue. Hours will be from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Special attractions to include a PRR cabin car, a Nickel Plate caboose on display, and an operating interlocking machine from Quincy, Ohio connected to the layout. Bring the entire family to enjoy a behind the scenes look at their railroad. Admission: $2.00, ages 13 and up; $1.00, ages 4-12; 3 and under admitted free. For more information, contact: Edward Skerness, (614) 895-0463 before 9:00 p.m.; e-mail: amrecrr@hotmail.com

Ohio, Hilliard — Central Ohio N-Trak will be presenting Ohio N Scale Weekend "For N-Scalers by N-Scalers" May 1-3, at the Franklin County Fairgrounds. Hours will be 1:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. on Friday; from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Saturday; and from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. on Sunday. Event registration is $10.00. For more information, contact: David White, (614) 991-4547; e-mail: dcwizard@wowway.com; or visit www.centralohiontrak.org

Pennsylvania, Allentown — The Great Lehigh Valley Train Meet will be held on May 16-17th, at Merchants Square Mall, 1901 S. 12th Street. Hours will be from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on Saturday, and from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. on Sunday. Attractions to include over 12,000 square feet of model trains, parts, railroadiana, operating layouts, door prizes, and more. Admission: $5.00, adults; children 12 and under admitted free with an adult. For more information, contact: Valley Rail Promotions, P.O. Box 64, Coplay, PA 18037; (610) 440-0487; www.valleygoto.com

Pennsylvania, Strasburg — The Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania, 300 Gap Road, will be offering Barons & Builders, a summer day camp for children, July 13 –17th for children ages 9 and 10, and July 27-31 for children 11 and 12. Camp will be in session from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. daily. Camp activities will include touring equipment in the Museum, riding an Amtrak train, building LEGO train cars to take home, and creating plans for railroads. Admission: $125.00, for Friends of the Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania Members; $175.00 for non-members. Participation will be limited to 15 campers per session. Deadline for registration is June 8th. For more information, contact: Elizabeth Myers, (717) 687-8628, ext. 3009; e-mail: programs@rrmuseumpa.org; or visit: www.rrmuseumpa.org

Pennsylvania, Villanova — The East Penn Traction Club's 19th National Trolley Meet will be held May 29-31, at the Pavilion at Villanova University, located on Lancaster Avenue (US Rt. 30), near I-476 and SEPTA Regional Rail and Norristown High Speed Lines. Hours will be from 6:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. on Friday, from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m. on Saturday, and from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon on Sunday. Attractions to include awards for modules and displays, operating trolley layouts (all scales, 3/4", 1/2", G, O, HO, N), slides, movies, videos, model contests, door prizes, clinics, new works in progress program, and a self guided rail tour. This year's meet contest theme is "Double Ended Trolley Cars." Admission: $18.00, adults; $20.00 after May 1st. Spouses and children are admitted free with a registered adult. For more information, contact: Charles Long-Registrar, 17 Lanfair Rd., Cheltenham, PA 19012-1810; (215) 635-5288; www.eastpenn.org

Washington, Bremerton — Bremerton Northern Model Railroad Club will be sponsoring a Swap Meet on June 13th, upstairs at the Knights of Columbus Hall, 2515 Burwell. Hours will be from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Admission: $2.00, donation, adults; children under 12 admitted free. For more information, call: Dan or Marion Weston, (360) 633-7217; or e-mail: marionanddan@live.com

CANADA

Canada, Prince Edward Island, Summerside — Island Rails 2009 - MFMR Convention will be held May 22-24th, at the Silver Fox Curling and Yacht Club. The 2009 Maritime Federation of Model Railroaders Convention and Annual General Meeting on Prince Edward Island will commemorate 20 years since trains left P.E.I. Attractions to include model and photo contests, clinics, operating layouts, and more. For more information, visit: IslandRails2009.WordPress.com

MRN: A Year in Review

As a courtesy to our readers, we have compiled an index featuring every product reviewed in the pages of MRN over the past year. We hope you find it useful.

April 2009

Project DCC, Part 9A: Computer Control Introduction
Athearn (HO) Genesis SD60M Diesel Locomotive
CMW (HO) Utility Truck
Charles Smiley (DVD) *Your Colorful Southern Pacific*
Kato (N) *Broadway Limited* Passenger Car Set & Add On
MTH (O) Premier Line Dash 8 Diesel Locomotive
Micro-Trains (Z) ACF Passenger Car Set
Piko (Large) Garden Train Set
Rivarossi (HO) 4-8-8-4 *Big Boy* Steam Locomotive
Sunset Models (HO) Brass SP Mogul Steam Locomotive
Walthers (N) Cornerstone Sanding Tower Kit & (HO) *Hiawatha* Set Conclusion

March 2009

Project DCC, Part 8 Integrating a Grade Crossing
Aristo-Craft (L) 2-Bay Hopper
Atlas (N) Code 65 True-Track & (HO) Covered Hopper
Bachmann (On30) Railbus and Trailer & (Book) *E-Z Model Railroads*
Banta (HO, S & O) Railroad Signs
Bar Mills (HO & O) Gas Stop
Bluford Shops (N) Auto Boxcars
Broadway Limited (HO) 2-10-2 Steam Locomotive
Drail Modelspoor (Windows PC) *AnyRail Layout Design Software*
Norscot (HO) Caterpillar D9T Bulldozer
S Helper (S) CNJ Cement Car
USA Trains (1:29) *Docksider* 0-6-0T Steam Locomotive

February 2009

Project DCC, Part 7B Signal System Wiring
Aristo-Craft (DVD) *How Model Trains Are Made*
Atlas O (O) MP15 Locomotive
Bachmann (1:20.3) Davenport Critter Mechanical Locomotive
Broadway Limited C30-7
Digitrax (Z, N & HO) DZ125 Decoder
Kato (N) Southern Pacific PA-1 & PB-1 Diesel Locos & GG1 Electric Locomotive
Lenz (DCC) Lenz Set-100 Starter Set Upgrade
Matysik Display Shelf (Multi Scale) Display Shelves
Old and Weary (HO) Tappan Station
Piko (1:22.5) Taurus Locomotive
Seivers Benchwork (ALL) Benchwork Section Kits
Walthers (HO) H-10-44 Diesel Loco & Everett Street Station

January 2009

Project DCC, Part 7A Signal System Wiring
Special Report: Kader Buys Sada Kan
Athearn (N) F45/FP45 Diesel Locomotive & (HO) Checker Cab
Faller (N) Animated Car System
Grand River Models (S) Greg's Grocery Kit
MRC (DCC) 1820 Sound Decoder for Athearn RS3 Locomotive
MTH (HO) NYC 4-8-2 *Mohawk* & (O) CA-1 Caboose
Signature Press (Book) *Southern Pacific Freight Cars, Vol 5*
Walthers (HO) *Hiawatha* Diner and Tap Lounge & RS-2/RSC-2

December 2008

Aristo-Craft (1:29) 40-Foot Boxcars
Athearn (N) Ford C Rescue Trucks, (HO) CSX & Santa Fe Train Sets, (HO) F-7A/B Diesel Locomotive
Atlas (N) Trainman Train Set
Atlas O (O) Industrial Rail Starter Set
Bachmann (Track) E-Z Command DCC Turnouts
Blair Lines (HO) *Pizzaland* Kit
MTH (HO) Railking Scale Diesel Starter Set
Steamscenes (Calendars) 2009 Railroad Themed Calendars
Piko (HO) ICE-3 Train Set
Tokyo Marui (Z) Night Train Set

November 2008

Project DC, Part 6: Turnout Control Wiring
Athearn, Kato & Walthers (HO) Intermodal Cars
Atlas O (O) Master Line, Train Man & Industrial Rail Freight Car Roundup
Bachmann (Fn3) Boxcar
Charles Smiley (Video) *Key System Scrapbook*
Con-Cor (HO) Union Pacific M-10000
GC Laser (N & HO) Utility Truck Toolbox Kit
Granite Creek (On3) Logging Cars
Noch (HO) Shed/Kiosk Kit
Pine Canyon (S0 Professional Building Kit
Preiser (HO) Vegetable Wagon
Smoky Mountian (S) 41-foot Flat Car Kit
Train Control System (DCC & N) Decoder for "Classic N" Locomotives

October 2008

Special Coverage: MTH/MKT Trade Secret Lawsuit Settled
Project DCC Part 5: Track Assembly, Wiring, & Block Detection
Atlas (N) C420 Diesel Locomotive
Bachmann (HO) Peter Witt-Style Street Car
BVRR Specialties (Tool) Maxi-Grip Screw Starter
Grizzly Mountain Engineering (O) Farmers & Freight Wagons
Kadee (HO) Cushion Underframe Boxcars
Kato (N) Gunderson MAXI-IV Well Cars
Lionel (O) Legacy-Equipped FEF-3 Steam Locomotive
NCE (Electronics) DCC Wireless System
NSLC (Tool) Flamingo Glue
Oak Tree Systems (Electronics) SC-2 Servo Controller
Preiser (O) American Railroad Figures
Ye Olde Huff N Puff (On30) Freight Car Kits

September 2008

Special Coverage: NMRA 2008 National Train Show
Project DCC Part 4: Layout Configuration
Banta/Bachmann (On30) Boxcar Body Conversion Kit
Factory Direct Trains (HO) Trackmobile
Golden West Books (Book) *West Coast Interurbans-California*
Lionel (O) Legacy 990 Command Control System
MTH (HO) GS4 4-8-4 *Daylight* (O) Railking SW1 Diesel Locomotive
Red Caboose (HO) S-40-5 Stock Cars
Smokey Mountain Model Works (S) Ventilated Boxcars
Tomix (N) Freight and Fire Trucks
Wheels of Time (N) Harriman Passenger Cars
Woodland Scenics (O) Scenic Accent Figures

August 2008

Project DCC Part 3: DCC System Familiarization
Allen Keller (DVD) *Great Model Trains Vol. 58*
Aristo-Craft (1:24) C-16 Steam Locomotive
Bachmann (All Scales) DCC Control System, (Fn3) Tank Cars
Brass Trains (Book) *Brass Model Trains Price & Data Guide Vol. 1*
Broadway Limited (HO) Union Pacific Big Boy Steam Locomotive
Intermountain (N) SD45-2 Diesel Locomotive and Wood Deck Flat Car
Kato (N) Daylight Northern 4-8-4 GS 4 Steam Locomotive Set
MTH O) 19th Century Wood Coaches
Sidetrack Laser (HO) Cougar Ridge Lumber Co.
Siflor (All Scales) Landscaping Material
Walthers (HO) Proto 2000 Early EMD Road Switchers

July 2008

Special Coverage: How to Modify Your Old Roundhouse Box Cab
Project DCC Part 2
Athearn (HO) SD40-T Tunnel Motors
Bachmann (On30) Baldwin 4-4-0 American Steam Locomotive
Brass Guide (Book) *Brass Train Guide Book*
First Gear International (HO & O) TD25 Crawler
ESU/Loksound (All Scales) Sound Decoder with Railmaster Hobbies Ported Speakers
ICOM (N) TMC400 Motorcar, Park Set, Park Institution, and Bulldozer
Micro-Trains (N) 40-Foot Drop Bottom Gondola with Woodchip Extension
River Point Station (HO) F-350 Duallies
USA Trains (1:29) Fairmont Speeders

June 2008

Nuremberg International Toy Fair 2008
Project DCC Part 1
Aristo-Craft (1:29) Live Steam 2-8-2 Mikado Steam Locomotive
Athearn (HO) F-850 Flat Bed MOW Trucks
Atlas Trainman (N) Thrall 4759 Covered Hopper and Master Line (N) ACF 5701
Centerflow Plastics Hopper
Blair Line (HO) Gerald Depot Laser-Cut Kit
Broadway Limited (HO) Blueline RSD-14 "Alligator" Diesel Locomotive
Busch (HO) Summer Cottage Built-Up Structure
Castline (S) Auto-Thentic Pontiac Star Chief, Ford Crestliner & Mercury Sun Valley Autos
Charles Smiley (DVD) *Union Pacific Scrapbook*
Great Northern Book Publishing (BOOK) *BNSF Railway Freight Cars Vol 2.*
Marklin (Z) Commodore J1e Hudson Locomotive
Tangent Scale Models (HO) PS-2CD Hoppers
Walthers (N) Proto N GP18 Diesel Locomotive
Weaver Models (O) Head End RPO and Baggage Cars
Western Scale Models Blacksmith Shoppe Craftsman-style Structure Kit

May 2008

Special Report: 1:87 Vehicle Coverage from the 2008 International Toy Fair
American Ltd. Sand Towers and Fuel Cranes
Aristo-Craft (Large Scale) Rail Joiners Track Accessory
Athearn (HO) Genesis EMD MP15AC Switcher Standard DC & Sound DC/DCC
Atlas O (O) EMD F2/F3s 2-Rail and 3-Rail
Bachmann (1.20.3) Side-Door Gondola
CMW/Walthers (HO) GM PD 4103 Intercity Bus
Golden West Books (Book) *Piggyback and Containers: A History of Rail Intermodal on America's Steel Highway*
MNP/Bachmann/NCE (O) DCC-Powered Track Cleaning Car
Masterpiece (HO) 2007 Jeep Wrangler Unlimited
Micro-Trains (N) ACF Three Dome Tank Car
PrairieWorks (DVD) *SOO Line: From Michigan to Montana*
USA Trains (1:29) "Great Lakes" Ore Cars
Walthers (N) Cornerstone Injection-Molded Structure Kits, (HO) Hiawatha 52-Seat Coach and Express Car

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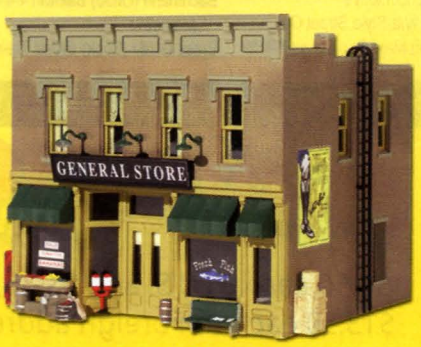

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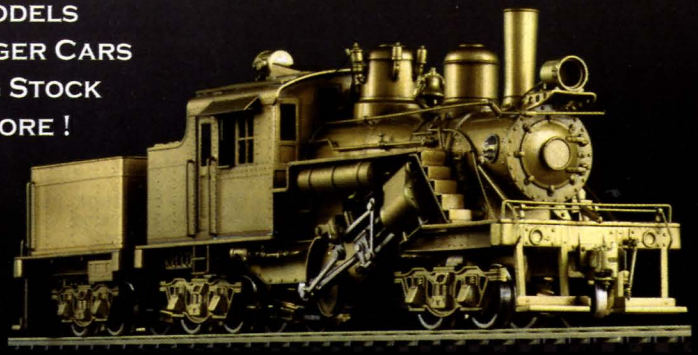

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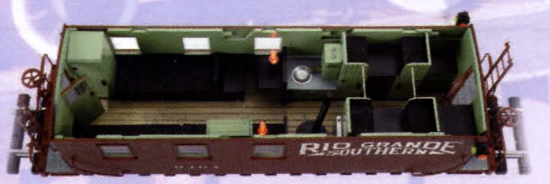
Every train needs a caboose, and the remarkable detailing of our 1:20.3 Long Caboose makes it the perfect complement to any narrow gauge consist.

Coming Soon

DENVER & RIO GRANDE WESTERN #0505	Item No. 88795
RIO GRANDE "Flying Grande"	Item No. 88797
PAINTED, UNLETTERED - oxide brown	Item No. 88798
PAINTED, UNLETTERED - oxide RED	Item No. 88799



RIO GRANDE SOUTHERN with
SINGLE WINDOW CUPOLA
Item No. 88796

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